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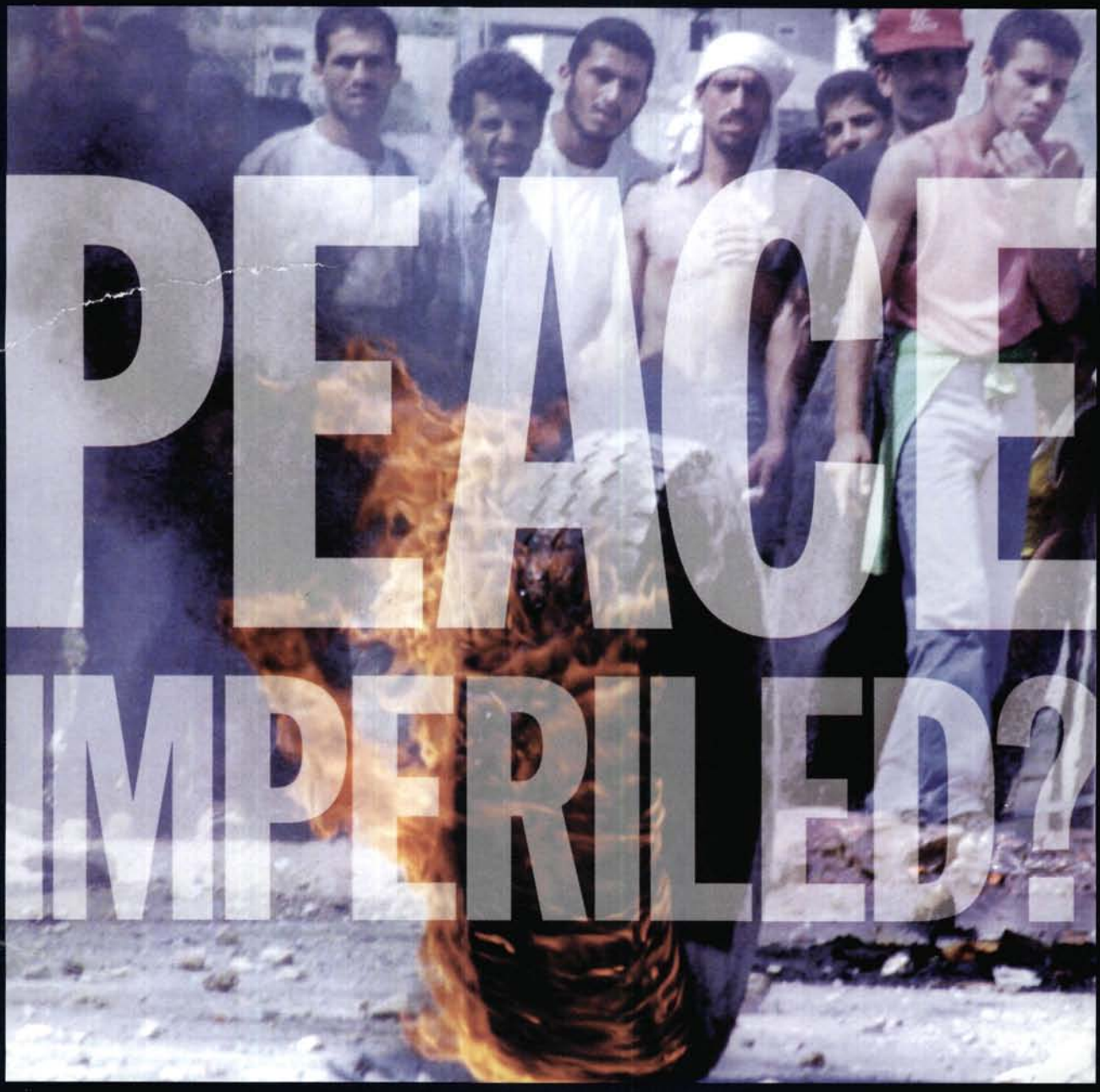

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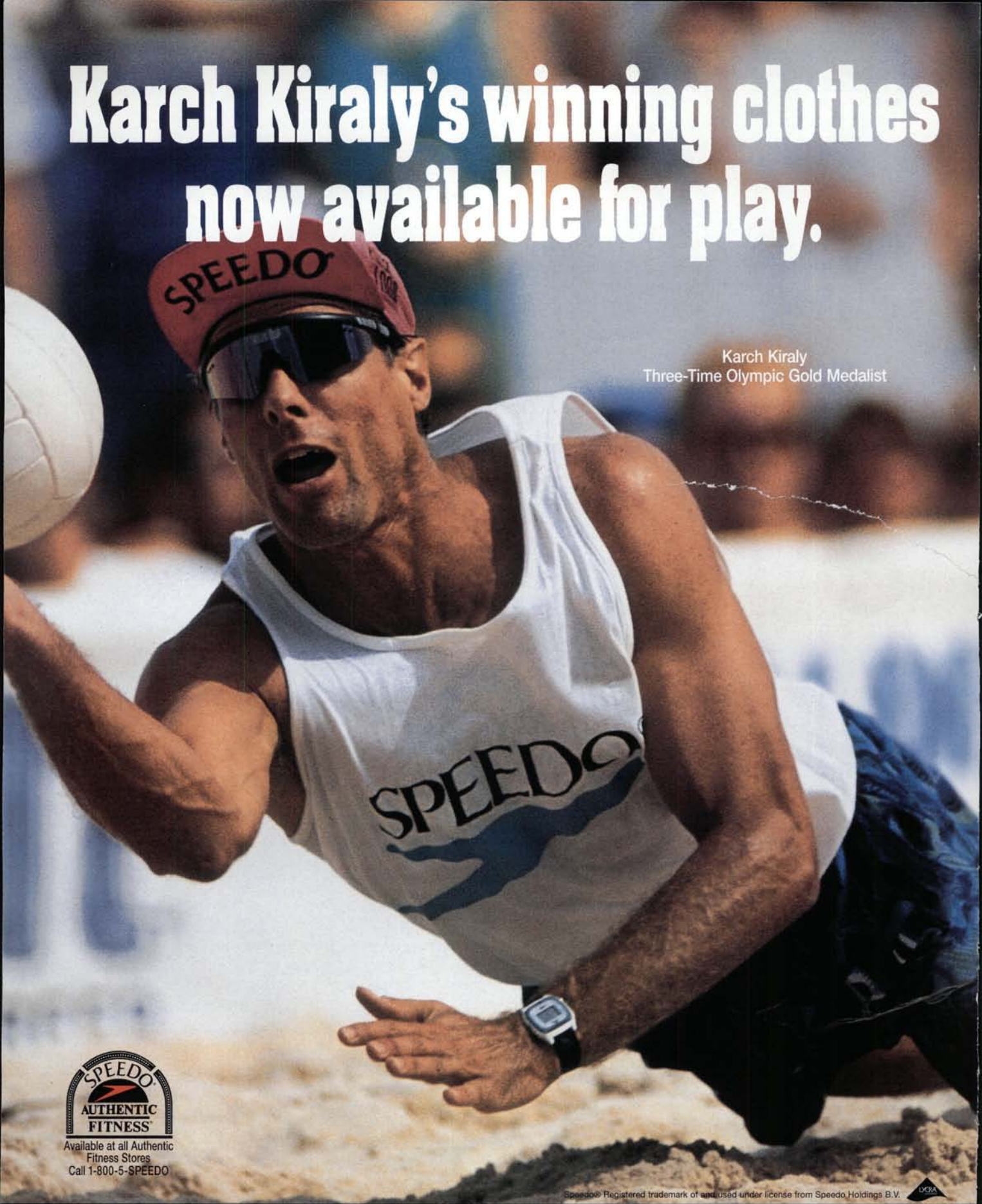

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CORRESPONDENCE

Bad rap

To the editors:

I don't quite understand what Bill Stephney is proposing in his article "The Welfare Rap" (September 16 & 23). He says that rap music has created "dozens of young, black multimillionaire businesspersons" and that this is some sort of alternative to "the welfare/child support system." Is he proposing that the dozens of male millionaires marry the thousands of single mothers so they won't have to accept welfare?

He feels sorry for the poor 19-year-old male who impregnated his girlfriend since this young man has no paternity rights yet must provide financial support. The reality is, as Stephney concedes, many of these young men are not employed and cannot provide any financial support. Should the mother marry him anyway? And, if this powerlessness vis-à-vis his own offspring terrifies this hypothetical young man so much, why didn't he think to put on a condom?

If we take Stephney's advice to blow up welfare, what will happen to all the young mothers, and their children, who know better than to marry an unemployed father? Will jobs magically materialize for the fathers? Will Stephney make them into multi-millionaires?

SHANNON STONEY
Cookeville, Tennessee

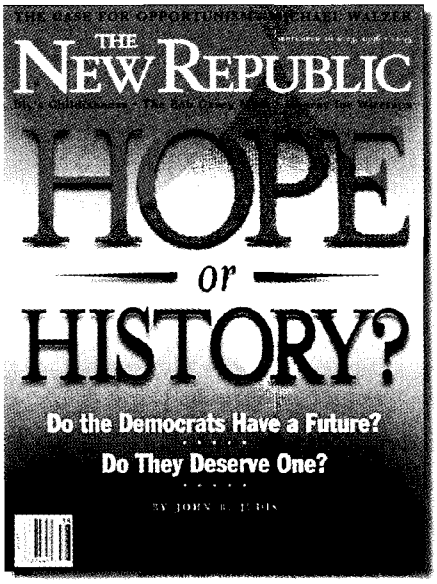
To the editors:

Having convinced himself that the so-called "child-industrial complex," the "civil rights-big government coalition" and, in short, the whole "welfare/child-support system" are what lie at the root of the problems facing black males in contemporary America, StepSun Music CEO Bill Stephney thinks he's hit upon a simple, and indeed final, solution: "Welfare: blow it up," he counsels. "Get rid of it."

The crimes that the welfare state has committed against black males are as grave as they are many, Stephney believes. The welfare state has created a "black female matriarchy"—its greatest crime of all, it would appear. Whether it's a faithful rendering of the beliefs of a preponderance of young black males is another matter. But I'll bet there's a preponderance of young black women with kids who wouldn't trade what meager child support, housing assistance and Food Stamps they now receive thanks to the efforts of the "civil rights-big government coalition" for the privilege of making creeps like Stephney feel good about themselves again.

Worst of all was Stephney's non sequitur: his argument that the criminally high rate at which black males are being incarcerated in the United States today has resulted from the adoption of the Great Society programs and laws of the '60s. Stephney's proof? In 1960 (i.e., before the Great Society), a lower percentage of black males were behind bars than today. Simultaneously, a higher percentage of black kids were being born to parents who were married.

Thus, in one fell swoop, Stephney tried to disabuse TNR's readers of the illusion that the racist character of U.S. society might have something to do with



the criminal justice system's varying rates of incarceration.

The United States incarcerates black males at eight times the rate it incarcerates white males because black males hate their mothers? And black males in turn hate their mothers because the welfare system has destroyed black families by creating a "black female matriarchy" that both devalues black males and replaces them with a monthly check worth millions? Right.

DAVID PETERSON
Evergreen Park, Illinois

To the editors:

It takes two to play the conception game, and, if a 19-year-old male does not want his 18-year-old "shorty" to get pregnant, he has options, as does she. Rap representing young black male anxiety over the black female matriarchy sounds an awful lot like displaced anger and frustration, also known as scapegoating. Blaming those below you on the social scale is an age-old tradition and one that gets you nowhere. Blaming black females for the welfare problem is not only absurd but nonproductive.

PHYLLIS STINSON
New York, New York

Analphabet

To the editors:

I am glad that Liesl Schillinger ("East Side Story," September 16 & 23) made it safely back to London without someone successfully selling her a deed to the Brooklyn Bridge, but those wily New Yorkers certainly sold her a bunch of other goods. Loisaida? I don't think so.

The East Village has expanded, and it has done so all the way to Avenue C and even D. Rents are low, neighbors don't complain about the noise emanating from after-hours clubs. The homeless still occupy buildings, and Thompkin's Square Park is still home to some fairly disconnected people. The "miracle" of the East Village is safety in numbers. The more store fronts that open, the more people are out on the street, the more general activity there is, the safer it gets. Then more businesses set up, bringing more people, more activity, etc.

Avenues C and D are homes to housing projects, which for some reason house a population more Hispanic than black. Bodegas dot the streets near the projects, and salsa can be heard from the windows and cars. But even us white yuppies from the West Village know about the stretch of uninterrupted park and pavement past C and D that follows the East River. It's perfect for biking, walking, rollerblading, though jet skiing on the East River seems a stretch. On any given weekend day you will see denizens from the West Village, Chelsea, Soho, Tribeca, etc. taking advantage.

JOAN ADAMS
New York, New York

Silence the masses

To the editors:

It is interesting that Michael Walzer ("Opportunism Knocks," September 16 & 23) should have so stressed the word "betray" in referring to liberals' disappointment over President Clinton's ultimate acceptance of the welfare bill, on the theory that democracy requires presidents (i.e., politicians) to respond affirmatively to public opinion even to the surrender of substantive principle. Interesting particularly because Edmund Burke used precisely the same term in addressing his constituents in Bristol,

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November 3, 1774: "Your representative owes you not his industry only, but his judgment; and he betrays, instead of serving you, if he sacrifices it to your opinion." True, conditions were different then, and neither professional pollsters nor TV newshounds had yet appeared for good or ill. But surely the essential quality of leadership remains exactly to lead rather than follow. It is less than fitting for a president to eschew his bully pulpit and rest on the mea culpa of a Michael Walzer to bail him out.

IRVING M. HERMAN
Boca Raton, Florida

To the editors:

I share Michael Walzer's repugnance for the recently passed welfare bill. But I would not be so quick to attribute it to a failure of left-liberal motivation. It is not true, as Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan has claimed, that "no one came to Washington to lobby." Feminists led the way; we came early and often. The Women's Committee of 100, a newly formed organization of hundreds of women academics, activists and social welfare professionals, visited the Hill frequently while the legislation was being considered. We were often joined by members of NOW and, when they could afford it, grass-roots activists such as the Welfare Warrior. Senator Moynihan, in his passionate opposition to the bill, seems to have forgotten that we tried repeatedly to see him and let him know that he had our support.

The left might have done more, but it is not true that it remained totally silent. If it had, the president's decision about signing would not have been so anguished; he knew that masses of his supporters (with the exception of the editors of TNR) would be furious.

SONYA MICHEL
Women's Committee of 100
Urbana, Illinois

To the editors:

Michael Walzer writes, "Waiting for a principled president is bad politics," that in democratic politics "we want presidents to be responsive, to take regular soundings of the people's views. . . ." But Walzer ignores the role of president as the nation's chief educator, the prime communicator who leads the country by using his vast resources to peer over the horizon. A president who is a leader can gain acceptance for initially unpopular ideas: Lincoln on emancipation, Wilson on income tax, FDR on Social Security and lend lease, Lyndon Johnson on Medicare and Medicaid.

JEROME GROSSMAN
Wellesley, Massachusetts

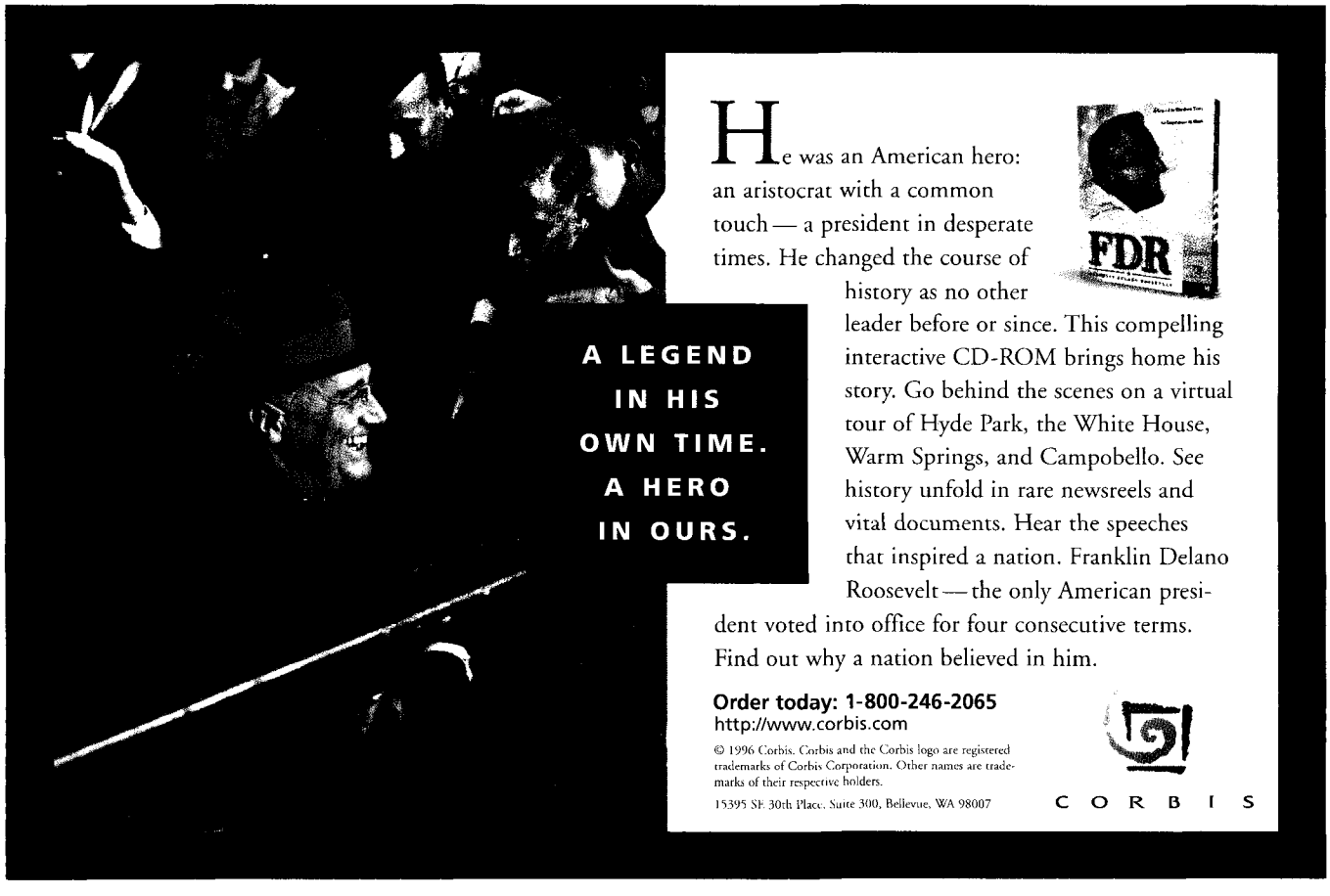
Black and blue

To the editors:

Having read and reread Matthew Cooper's commentary about the raison d'être of African American political affiliations, I wonder more than a little if Cooper is aware of just how patronizing are his remarks ("Black Out," September 16 & 23). Allied with him in principle—yes, there should be greater participation by blacks in all political parties—the way in which that principle is put forward is precisely why people like me aren't going to budge in any new direction.

Cooper accurately states that "forces of attraction and repulsion seem to be shaping the black vote." However, it is in his examples of both emotions that he gets into real trouble. To think that Newt Gingrich's mere reading of a quote from Dr. King is "reach[ing] out to minorities" is intellectual snobbery at the very least. Even more abhorrent is Cooper's implication that President Clinton's "cultural gesture—belting blues on his saxophone or chowing on barbecue" is the way to a black person's vote. I love the blues and I love barbecue, but neither one is going to affect my decision as to how I cast my vote for president.

CLAUDIA POLLEY
Indianapolis, Indiana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FROM WASHINGTON

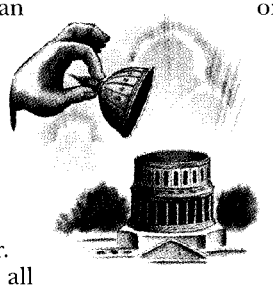
Winning ugly

With presidential debates upon us, congressional races entering their last lap and attack ads poised for firing, it's time for Democrats to take one last look at Medicare before they leap. By all accounts, the Democrats plan to use Medicare to unleash the biggest air raid since the Pentagon lit up Baghdad in the first nights of Desert Storm. But it's no use asking them not to demagogue the issue, a proven vote-getter, any more than you could have asked Republicans not to caricature Clinton's health plan back in 1994. Yes, by the end of the last Congress the two parties' Medicare plans were just pennies apart, and, in a better world, GOP freshmen would get credit for having faced up to this thorny issue instead of being flayed for it. But that's politics. Even with Dole falling off stages and building a Brooklyn bridge to the Dodgers, revenge-hungry Dems will want to slam Newt & Company with everything they've got.

There's just one problem. Thanks to trust fund trouble and those nagging demographics, whoever wins will have to make Medicare reform a central issue in next year's legislative session. But if Democrats scare the daylights out of seniors as part of their now plausible White-House-plus-House-of-Representatives sweep, dozens of freshmen could arrive in town with disastrous little contracts with America that keep the program off-limits. What's an entitlement-reform-minded-but-win-at-all-costs-Dem to do?

At last there's an answer: the Democrat's Guide to Responsible Medicare Demagoguery. Purists will quibble, but pols, like all con men, know there are countless shades of deception. Now wimpy Dems who'd otherwise balk at hitting below the belt can rest easy in the knowledge that they can maul their opponents on Medicare and still do the right thing next year—all without logical inconsistency or unsightly "read my lips" betrayals. Candidates, listen up:

Get personal. Forget what your debate coach told you about the illegitimacy of ad hominem attacks. Thoughtful Democrats should avoid rational argument altogether and bash Republicans personally. Why? Because Republicans have the facts on their side; if anything, the $270 billion in seven-year savings they originally proposed last year will be little more than a down payment on what we'll need as the baby boom ages. Sidestepping the truth while showcasing general GOP nastiness accomplishes the overriding objective of Responsible Demagoguery—nail the bastards to the wall without mentioning any specifics whatsoever. For reform-minded Democrats, this low road is actually the high road, since it maximizes your wiggle room on policy next year.



What does this mean in practice? Irresistible though it is, never attack your GOP opponent for the Medicare premiums, deductibles or co-payments he voted to raise. And don't rule out eventual increases in the Medicare payroll tax, either. You'll only have to swallow all this yourself next year, and in the heat of the campaign debate you might inadvertently pledge not to. Instead, run clips of Dole saying he's proud to have voted against Medicare in 1965. Then morph your rival into Newt calling for the Health Care Financing Administration to "wither on the vine," and pretend he said that about Medicare itself (he didn't, but we're talking least-worst demagoguery here). While you're at it, remind voters that serving divorce papers on his ailing wife is the kind of compassion Gingrich tends to show when he gets near hospitals. Remember, you simply want voters to trust Democrats to fix Medicare "the right way"—they don't need to be dazzled by what that really means.

Get plutocrats. Nothing gets working Americans madder than the idea that a wholesome program for grandma might be gutted to give big tax breaks to the rich. You wisely made this charge a staple during last year's budget debate. That was lucky, since many of you admitted privately that, without the GOP's foolish tax cut, you'd have had little to say about their plan to slow Medicare's projected annual growth from 10 percent to 7 percent, which Clinton himself had toyed with in 1993. The challenge now for responsible demagogues is to stress this tax-cut-for-the-rich angle while dumping the "$270 billion" mantra. There's no magic (but big risks) in attacking such a specific number. Far wiser to slam the GOP's "billions and billions" in savings—that still sounds scary enough to qualify as "doomsday," while also giving you important protection. Never forget that Medicare baseline forecasts (from which savings get calculated) jump around a lot; you'd hate to be caught next summer calling for more "cuts" than the villains did.

Get macho. You don't need to be a bold leader—just play one on TV. For example, stitching the simple aside "the status quo is not an option" into your every Medicare utterance does more than signal that you're a forward-looking type. It covers your butt when you make a Medicare fix the surprise centerpiece of next year's agenda. In this regard, you should also rule out the temptation to punt the whole thing to a bipartisan commission. That only assures we'll lose precious time. Bottom line: you need to fudge, not punt, to win.

Don't "cut." Go ahead: call Republicans fat cat, granny-killing, heartless cavemen who've fought humanity's long march toward social justice every step of the way. But don't call their Medicare savings "cuts." Newt was right. All nitpicking aside, labeling the GOP's 40 percent increase over seven years a "cut" has a truly corrupting effect on public understanding, given what we'll have to do to restrain entitlement growth in the next decade. Even the president feels guilty about this, as he revealed at a briefing back in May when he defended himself by saying "we all learned to use it [cut] from the press." Clinton also knows such language can boomerang if Democrats have to govern again themselves. Luckily, "cut" isn't necessary when perfectly fine words like "gut," "wreck" and "decimate" are available.

Cynics will say such niceties don't matter, that campaign rhetoric is no bar to subsequent action. "First, you've got to get power," said Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew, speaking for pols across the ages. "Then, having got power, you say, 'What's the problem? Have I said these things? If so, let's forget it.' " Would that it were always so easy. Without Clinton's "end welfare as we know it" vow in 1992, we'd never have had a Democrat-approved "reform" that puts more poor kids at risk than anything Nixon or Reagan would have dared. Or ask George Bush about his "read my lips" line—you can reach him in Houston. The little statesman inside every demagogue knows that rhetoric matters. So far-sighted Democrats should demonize with care. Happy hunting.

MATTHEW MILLER

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

OCTOBER 21, 1996

THE CONFLICT CONTINUES

"Israel doesn't make unilateral concessions any more," Benjamin Netanyahu told 6,000 Christian pilgrims in Jerusalem last week. This had been his promise to the Israeli electorate, and, with one exception, he has kept it. (The exception, lost in the latest bloodshed, is his relaxation of the blanket restrictions on Palestinian entry into Israel proper. Shimon Peres imposed the restrictions in response to this spring's terrorist bombings, and their easing now allows roughly 50,000 laborers to enter Israel daily. If you do not want restive neighbors, Netanyahu realized, you'd better let them earn a living.)

But Yasir Arafat and his comrades do not want Palestinian restiveness appeased. They have uses for it, especially because they understood from the day Netanyahu was elected that a modus vivendi between the Palestinian Authority and Israel would now have to be premised on reciprocity, which is not what they had been accustomed to under Shimon Peres. For this reason the P.A. nurtures a bitter nostalgia for Peres, who was its international fund-raiser and its caretaker, shouldering something like a Jewish white man's burden for the Arabs and trying to compensate for Arafat's own inability to make much positive out of the power he had. So there is a terrible irony in all this. It was Palestinian violence which discredited Peres in Israel, electing Netanyahu prime minister. And now Palestinian violence has been deployed to protest the consequences of that election. But for weeks, even months, the Palestinian leadership has been threatening to summon the young *shebab* masses into the streets, and Arafat had for weeks been recruiting martyrs, intoning the scriptural chorus, "We will fight for the cause of Allah, and kill and be killed. . . ."

Let us, then, not be deluded by the witless orthodoxy of the American media that the bloodshed was provoked, perhaps intentionally, by the opening of the door to the now famous tunnel adjoining the Western Wall. This was not Israeli provocation; it was Palestinian pretext. Pity the poor Palestinian shopkeeper Khaled Doneh who had the temerity to tell *The Los Angeles Times*, "For us it's good. It's nothing against the mosques. It's for the tourists. And now, more tourists will come."

The accusation that the tunnel undermines the foundation of what Muslims call Haram al-Sharif is nonsense with a historic pedigree. The former Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Hajj Amin al-Husseini, who spent the war years in the embrace of Adolf Hitler, continually tried to excite the faithful by speaking darkly of the malign designs of the Jews on the Temple Mount. So, too, his relative Yasir Arafat.

It is almost indecent to have to state obvious facts again. But, if one must, there is no better source than Meron Benvenisti, a learned and impassioned critic of Israeli policy toward the Palestinians. In *City of Stone*, forthcoming from the University of California Press, he tells of small and nasty groups of Jewish zealots who, "for the benefit of television cameras" and sometimes by violence, annually try to break the long-standing policy according to which Jews do not pray on the Mount.

> The police, however, have not permitted this, and have forcibly ejected them from the area. The police response is based on a cabinet decision in accordance with which "explicit orders have been given not to allow Jews to hold prayers in the Temple Mount compound so as not to bring about confrontation and disturbances of public order." Nearly every year these groups petition the High Court of Justice in an attempt to have the orders repealed. However, the court has consistently rejected their pleas. . . . Immediately following the occupation of the Temple Mount in 1967, Moshe Dayan [then defense minister] officially endorsed the status quo, and it has endured to this day. The entire area, including the mosques, other buildings, and all the gateways to the Mount save one, remained in the hands of the Muslim religious authorities (the *Waqf*). Jews were permitted to visit, but not to pray. Dayan's decision was astounding in its daring. The Jews returned after a thousand years of exile and conquered their holy place and symbol of their national independence, and despite this enormous load of emotional baggage, an Israeli leader made a rational decision in order to prevent a religious war whose consequences were beyond conjecture.

Netanyahu has not strayed an inch from the Dayan precedent. Yet Arafat cynically exhorts his followers by telling them the mosques are in danger.

There is no mystery why, and why now. When the intifada began in Gaza on December 9, 1987, sparked by a simple road accident, it caught Arafat off guard. Humiliated, he rode the initiative of the children of stones. This time, he unleashed Palestinian fury when he wanted it unleashed, and he reined it in when it served his advantage. But, since the fury was "in defense" of

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Muslim holy places, the tunnel became a bridge between Fatah and Hamas.

The tunnel also served Arafat, or rather his police, in a different way. In the three years since the handshake on the White House lawn, they had become hated instruments of repression. Without real professional discipline, and schooled either in the specialized ways of terror or in the random cruelty of the streets, they had done what is normal in the Middle East: torture political opponents and carry out personal vendettas. They also had the unpopular job of capping the volcano of popular discontent with the peace arrangements with Israel. But the outbursts of mayhem after the tunnel opening provided the Palestinian police an opportunity to bond with the Palestinian people—by firing on Israeli soldiers. No longer oppressors, the police were transformed into brothers in the struggle.

And in this transformation, the Palestinian police, their salaries subsidized by cash transfers from the Bank of Israel, used guns provided them by the grace of Israel as well. (If Netanyahu was reneging on Oslo how come he hasn't stopped these payments?) The bigger rub is that what transformed the Palestinian police in the eyes of the Palestinian population is a serious violation of the Oslo agreements. No one envisioned the Palestinian police shooting at Israeli troops. No one, for that matter, imagined there would be more armed personnel than the 30,000—there may now be as many as twice that—provided for in the Oslo compact. No one but the Israeli right, who asserted, correctly, that the Palestinian police are not police at all; they are soldiers. They carry not pistols but machine guns. If these legions fire on Israeli soldiers again, the Israel Defense Forces will re-enter the cities of the West Bank to disarm them, and they will return in tanks and personnel carriers, with protection from helicopter gunships. Of course, the armed men will hide among unarmed civilians, and the casualties will be frightful. But this will not be an intifada; it will be guerrilla warfare. And it will be on Arafat's head.

The peace process's fundamental flaw was its assumption that, given major territorial concessions from Israel at the beginning, the Palestinians would concede some of their ambitions toward the end. This now seems unfounded. Even though more than 90 percent of the Palestinian population in the territories now live under Palestinian rule, there has been no softening of Palestinian demands. It has been clear for weeks—not least to Netanyahu's apprehensive colleagues on Likud's ultra-right—that he was about to agree to a redeployment from Hebron not significantly different from the one agreed to by Labor in Oslo II, and this would bring that percentage to nearly 100 percent. But there is also no sign that this most vexing of withdrawals from the city where the Jewish people was born and the matriarchs and patriarchs of Israel are buried would lead the Palestinians to modulate their demands. Thus, the entire dynamic of the negotiations is hijacked to the threat of violence by the Palestinians, and to the threat of violence by Palestinians armed with the assent of Israel.

Shimon Peres did not agree to a Palestinian state. But he did agree to a Palestinian army. For decades it had been axiomatic that there would be but one armed force, Israel's, between the Mediterranean and the Jordan. And now it must be conceded that, courtesy of the previous government, there is another force, a hostile force, between these two waters. Imagine the problem this would pose for Israel were there renewed fighting with Syria. Israel has given away its best cards, excepting Jerusalem, for nothing tangible. And the Palestinians are unlikely to concede anything important. More than likely, moreover, America's secretary of state doesn't think they should. Is this the president's position? If it isn't, Warren Christopher should go.

It made sense for the Clinton administration to try to defuse the current crisis by summoning a Washington summit. But gathering the parties was not easy. There was no problem with Netanyahu. He was asked, he came. King Hussein of Jordan did not balk either, although these meetings always leave him exposed and without adequate reward for his bravery. Yasir Arafat played hard to get, demanding all kinds of substantial concessions in advance. He said he wanted a summit in Cairo, which is where Hosni Mubarak wanted it also. But, when the U.S. insisted on playing host, Arafat procrastinated a bit and then duly boarded a plane. The Egyptian president was also invited. First he said no. Then yes. Finally it was no. He was too busy. He sent his foreign minister, Amr Mousa, the most mischievous of Arab diplomats, who probably regrets Sadat's peace with Begin. It's astonishing how Mubarak jerks the U.S. around, especially since the $2.2 billion in annual American emoluments keeps his regime alive. But our solicitude for Egypt's present rulers, without expectations or demands, reinforces their imperious ways. A summit on the state of Middle East peace should have dealt with Egypt's very cold peace with Israel and its inflammatory influence on the Palestinians. It didn't. And what did the last-ditch, pull-out-all-the-stops conclave achieve? Almost nothing. The Israelis and the Palestinians will soon begin ongoing negotiations back home, but judging from this week's summit, where Arafat refused to rule out future recourse to violence, and Netanyahu rejected any immediate withdrawal from Hebron, there's little reason for optimism.

Watching the television news from Jerusalem and Gaza, you would have thought World War III had broken out, and that Israel had started it. Oddly, the maximalist Arab position was expounded by none other than Zbigniew Brzezinski. In appearance after appearance he laid full blame for this crisis at Israel's doorstep and called upon the Clinton administration to force a showdown with Netanyahu. The TV bookers know whom to call when they need an anti-Israel voice: Zbig has been peddling his rancorous views against the Jewish state since long before he began advising Jimmy Carter on the unappreciated virtues of Hafez al-Assad. The newspapers weren't as personal in their enmities. But many still lapsed into

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their comfy institutional habits. Just one instance: in a chilling five-column headline on its front page on September 28, *The Washington Post* screamed, "In Gaza, Civilians Flee in Terror as Helicopters Attack From Night Sky." Over the article's continuation on page 22, the headline cried, "Gaza Calm Turns to Terror as Civilians Are Shot at Without Warning." At the ninth paragraph, after the jump and within a parenthesis, the reader was told that "helicopter gunships were called in to rescue trapped soldiers after an Israeli colonel was killed and six soldiers were wounded, the Associated Press reported. The accounts could not be independently confirmed." The *Post* headlines were so tendentious as to be false. And here in the story from the same day's *New York Times* is why: "The heaviest fighting was in the Gaza Strip. After the noon Friday Prayers, thousands of Palestinian youths marched on an Israeli post at Rafah, on the southern border with Egypt, throwing stones and gasoline bombs. One Israeli officer was killed. The Israelis withdrew from the post, and Palestinians raised a Palestinian flag. The demonstrators cut a hole through the wire fence and ran across to shake hands with Egyptians, while an Israeli Cobra gunship blasted the occupied border post from above."

It is tempting to think all this might have been avoided had the tunnel door remained closed. After all, as Ehud Barak, foreign minister in the Peres cabinet and the leading contender for the Labor leadership, told THE NEW REPUBLIC, "The tunnel did not open on to the Via Dolorosa for 2,000 years. We could have waited another few months." But surely Arafat would have found an alternate pretext for this demonstration of Palestinian force, as Barak, a former chief of staff and clear-eyed realist, conceded. Still, perhaps because of inexperience, Netanyahu has not been prudent in choosing those issues on which he draws lines in the sand. Soon after coming into office, for example, he said he would not see Arafat. Within weeks, however, he was obliged by Israeli public opinion to do exactly that, and he got exactly nothing in return. He and Israel would have been better served had he treated meeting Arafat as simple routine.

There are other symbolic matters which engage, perhaps entrap, his ideological mind. But despite this, his government and the P.A. had been moving ahead on the gritty problems of autonomy. Bibi Netanyahu, cynics say, is Israel's Bill Clinton. If he issues a particularly hard-line statement it is more than likely aimed at propitiating the extremists in his coalition. But he does so in order to move, cautiously but steadily, toward a stable and secure peace with the Palestinians.

Nonetheless, there have always been suspicions, and not only among the Likud, that many Palestinians really don't want peace with Israel at all, and that the struggle between Arafat's party and Hamas is for the loyalties of these people in particular. Arafat's decision to initiate a new level of armed combat between Israel and the Palestinians gives further credence to these suspicions. And if they are correct, even Shimon Peres would have found that the peace process is no guarantee of peace, no guarantee at all. •

NOTEBOOK

SOPS FOR SIMPLOT: It's probably no coincidence that much of the legislation Congress really wanted to pass but just couldn't squeeze in before this week's recess had to do with corporate welfare. One of the most important was an amendment to the Interior Appropriations bill sponsored by Democratic Senator Dale Bumpers of Arizona and Republican Senator Judd Gregg of New Hampshire which would have raised grazing fees on public lands. The bargain basement grazing fees on federal lands would put Crazy Eddie to shame. The feds charge $1.35 per animal unit month (a.u.m.), an arrangement Bumpers refers to as "Uncle Sucker's deal." That is well below the average $5.58 a.u.m. charged on state lands, and one-tenth of the average $11.20 a.u.m. charged on private lands. In real terms, the federal fee is also 43 percent lower than it was in 1980. The Bumpers amendment would have required ranchers to pay state rates for livestock over 5,000 a.u.m.s. Utah's Orrin Hatch warned darkly that the amendment would "drive many family ranchers out of business," conjuring up images of mom-and-pop ranchers struggling to make ends meet. But it turns out the only ranchers above the cutoff point are largely corporate giants Anheuser-Busch, William Hewlett of Hewlett-Packard and Idaho multi-billionaire J.R. Simplot. Perhaps the ends Senator Hatch is trying to make meet are his own.

WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN? The armchair campaign strategy delivered to conventional candidates by conventional pundits often tends to be, well, conventional. But, even by those standards, last week's column by Michael Kramer in *Time* stood out. Kramer's advice to Dole: "your own life's story is your best weapon." On taxes, "state your case that Clinton is for Big Government" and "remind voters that Clinton endorsed one of history's largest tax increases and that he favors a large government role in the nation's health care system." Drugs? "Recall Clinton saying that if he had to do it over again, he'd inhale." Kramer also counsels Dole to advocate school vouchers, admit his tobacco comments were mistaken and *not* promise to serve just one term. If Dole had been following this strategy all along, there's no way he'd be trailing in the polls right now.

SEEING DOUBLE: Bob Dole's economic flacks have devised yet another tortured defense for their candidate's tax-cut package. He's now going to help make up the lost revenue by cutting "corporate welfare," argued John Cogan, a Dole adviser, in a *New York Times* op-ed. Cogan cites studies by the Cato and Progressive Policy Institutes estimating that over $50 billion in federal spending falls into this category. One problem: Dole has already accounted for those savings. The bulk of business subsidies are distributed by the Departments of

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Energy and Commerce, which Dole has already promised to eliminate. And, while he can't eliminate these giveaways twice, would Dole—who once dubbed himself "Senator Ethanol" for his generosity to corporate welfare kingpin Archer Daniels Midland—hack away at corporate largess even once? Don't hold your breath.

REALLY BAD CRIMES:

Plot to kill officer had vicious side

—*The Chicago Tribune*, September 20

POLITICAL INSIGHT OF THE WEEK: " 'Falls can be serious, they can be painful and we should be thankful the candidate wasn't injured,' said [Kathleen Hall] Jamieson, dean of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania.... Jamieson noted that she recently slipped and fractured her wrist—'and I didn't get up and wave.' "
—*The Washington Post*, September 20.

THIS JUST IN:

Some phone psychics provide useless, erroneous information

—*Staten Island Sunday Advance*, September 15
(Thanks to Dena Nachman of Staten Island, New York.)

EAT YOUR SPINACH: Who says people who want to crack down on illegal border crossings can't relate to immigrants? Appearing recently on "The Charles Grodin Show," California Republican Representative Brian Bilbray noted that his mother emigrated from Australia and that he now lives near the San Diego border crossing. So it comes as no surprise that Bilbray knows the source of their pain: "This bill finally addresses a cruel hoax in our immigration policy," he said, referring to a bill which extends the barbed wire fence on the border and supplies border patrol agents with new laser gadgets and jeeps to better trap the illegals. "I have seen people killed and slaughtered. More people have died trying to cross the border illegally than died in the Oklahoma City bombing. I wish Washington would get outraged about that carnage." Then, tearing up, he recalled his personal encounters with aliens. "I personally rescued people, raised them up on the skids of helicopters. One woman came up to me in person and said," apparently in perfect policy English, " 'Mr. Bilbray, if you didn't want us here you would not be rewarding us.' " Where was she during the San Diego convention? •

Arafat's second wind.

COMEBACK KID

By Joel Greenberg

It had not been an easy summer for Yasir Arafat. The bad luck began with Benjamin Netanyahu's victory over Shimon Peres, Arafat's peace partner. Then, Netanyahu confirmed the Palestinian leader's worst fears: he refused to meet Arafat for eleven long weeks, delayed pulling back Israeli troops in Hebron and, finally, lifted curbs on the expansion of Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

To top it off, Arafat's own people were getting restless. Fed up with arrests and torture by the president's security forces, Palestinians held mass demonstrations and clashed with Palestinian police in the West Bank. The elected Palestinian council tangled with a surly Arafat over the adoption of a constitution, asserting its authority against his executive fiat and launching an inquiry into human rights abuses by his men. Rumors circulated of police officers taking bribes, smuggling alcohol, freeing prisoners and distributing other favors in exchange for gifts like cement and cinder blocks.

Arafat tried to deflect the internal criticism by rallying Palestinians against an external foe: Benjamin Netanyahu. He called for a general strike and mass prayers at the Al-Aksa mosque in Jerusalem a few weeks ago. But few Palestinians went along. An appeal to fight Jewish settlements "by all means" did not get much of a response either.

Although Palestinians were deeply frustrated by Israeli-imposed border closures that have kept them from jobs in Israel, and angered by the lack of progress in peace talks, they remained unmoved by Arafat's transparent attempts to turn attention away from his own shortcomings. Once the revered symbol of the Palestinian cause, Arafat found his authority undercut by domestic critics tired of his autocratic rule and an Israeli prime minister so intent on cutting him down to size that he would not even mention his name in speeches. Arafat seemed for the moment a lost figure, unable to mobilize his people and powerless in the face of superior Israeli strength.

But then his fortunes changed, thanks to Netanyahu. By opening a new exit to an archaeological tunnel that runs next to the Temple Mount, the site of Al-Aksa, Islam's third holiest shrine, Netanyahu provided Arafat with an emotive focus for his appeals against the Israeli government, a powerful rallying cry for his frustrated

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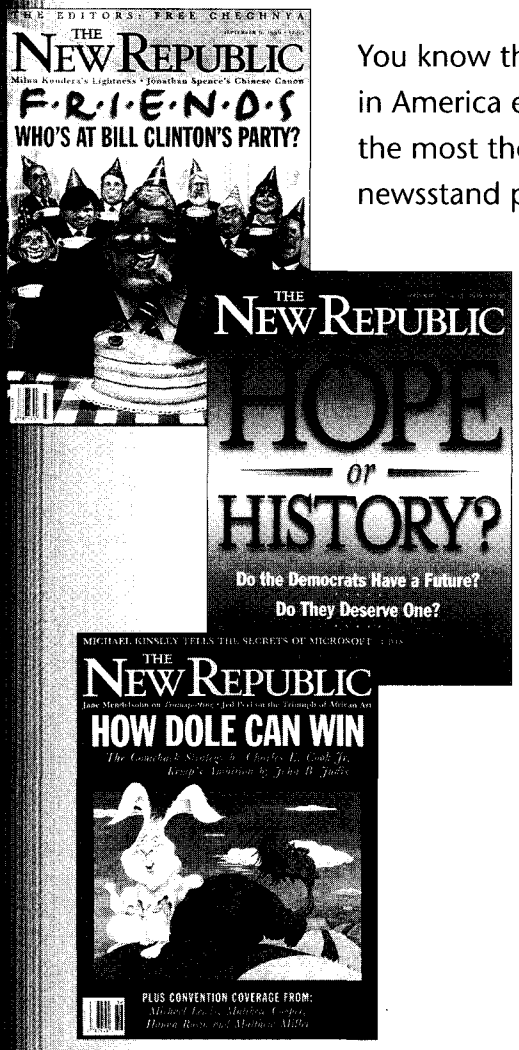

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people. This time Palestinian feelings were stirred. They perceived the opening as an attack on Islamic shrines and an attempt to preempt the final-stage talks on Jerusalem with a show of Israeli dominion. Arafat seized the opportunity to shore up his domestic standing and show the Israelis, as well as the world, that he was not powerless. He sent out a call for "mass confrontations in all cities and villages" over the Palestinian media. Arafat's thinking might have gone something like this: "Here I can clean up my image, I can pressure Netanyahu, and I can get the peace process moving," says political analyst Khalil Shikaki, who runs the Center for Palestine Research and Studies in Nablus.

That is not to say that Arafat ordered his police officers to shoot. He may well have wanted violent confrontations, but there is no evidence that he gave open-fire orders. By their own accounts, the Palestinian officers opened fire spontaneously after watching Israeli gunfire fell scores of stone-throwing protesters. One police officer who fired his gun in the Gaza Strip town of Rafah said his emotions got the better of his military discipline after a woman in a crowd of protesters encouraged him to fight back. A Palestinian wounded in the first outbreak of shooting in Ramallah said it began when a member of Arafat's elite Force 17 unit "lost his nerves" after he saw a wounded protester fall at his feet. The officer picked up his AK-47 rifle and began shooting, and soon everyone on both sides was firing away.

By shooting, the police officers redeemed themselves. Gone were accusations of police brutality, the charges that Arafat's troops were a collaborationist militia doing the bidding of Israel by cracking down on its enemies, Hamas and Islamic Jihad. When they opened fire at the Israelis, the Palestinian officers became national heroes, lionized for fighting back and defending their people.

After the first day of fighting, Arafat said nothing in public to stop the shooting, confining himself to closed meetings with his aides. So it continued into a bloody second day, when the fiercest clashes erupted throughout the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Palestinian officers made limited efforts to curb Palestinian protests, pushing back demonstrators and sometimes even firing in the air, but they were outnumbered and could hardly stand in the way of masses called out by Arafat himself. In the end, the officers joined the fighting, urged on by the stone-throwers and anxious to prove that they, too, were ready to do battle for the cause.

Eventually, Arafat reined in his officers. But in those three days of violence, Arafat accomplished his goal: he sent a firm message to Israel, his leadership was dramatically reaffirmed, and his forces basked in general admiration. The prominent newspaper *Al-Quds* ran a front-page picture of the Palestinian leader visiting a wounded boy in a hospital, reviving his old image as the father of the "children of the stones." Palestinian factions forgot their differences and rallied behind their leader against the Israeli foe.

"Of course Arafat's popularity has gone up," said a shopkeeper as he stood outside his empty furniture store on the deserted outskirts of Ramallah. The streets where Israeli and Palestinian soldiers clashed days earlier were now empty and strewn with rubble, watched over by Israeli soldiers at a checkpoint, guns at the ready. Nearby, other Israeli troops stretched barbed wire across a lot, fencing off their armored personnel carriers. Still higher up, on the rocky hills flanking the road, a pair of Israeli tanks took up positions facing the Palestinian town. It seemed like the old days were back, and Arafat was once again the battle-worn hero of the resistance: "This is a war and there is an enemy," the shopkeeper continued. "There is no alternative to Arafat."

But the Palestinian leader is hardly in a position to savor success; the fighting also showed the limits of his authority. He unleashed a wave of popular discontent and rode it but in the end was unable to prevent the unrest from spinning out of control. Members of his security forces continued shooting at Israeli soldiers even after he issued public orders over the radio to cease fire except in self-defense. Many of the Palestinian officers seemed to be firing on their own, following no discernible orders from above.

The surge of support for Arafat will not necessarily last. Now that he has built expectations, Palestinians will judge him based on his ability to force Netanyahu to comply with the accord. And that will not be so easy to accomplish. Netanyahu is still arguing that Palestinians have to meet their commitments first and prove they can satisfy Israeli security concerns before Israeli soldiers leave much of Hebron.

Even if the peace process moves forward, Arafat will still have to grapple with other Palestinian grievances, many of them economic. Tens of thousands of Palestinian laborers are barred from working in Israel, and movement of people and goods between the West Bank and Gaza Strip is heavily restricted. These sore points could eventually lead to another outburst of violence. Next time, perhaps, against Arafat himself.

"Arafat has been through a tremendous recovery, but he has not done anything in the past few days to correct all the things that have given him a bad name," says Shikaki. "Corruption is still there, the mismanagement, the security services out of control, lack of vision." The strategy may have worked, but only for the moment. "Arafat made a call based on his feeling that only this kind of violence and confrontation will be sufficient to create shock in the Israeli political system and to make Netanyahu move," Shikaki says. "But if he comes back empty-handed, then anger and frustration will multiply. Underneath there is extreme danger for him and the whole peace process, and I'm not sure that even he will be able to control events."

JOEL GREENBERG is a reporter in the Jerusalem bureau of *The New York Times*.

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Dole man

Bob Dole has made a big tax cut the centerpiece of his presidential campaign. I am not in favor of a big tax cut. But I am in favor of Bob Dole.

Two facts explain this apparent paradox. First, the alternative to Bob Dole's budget plan is not mine, but Bill Clinton's. Secondly, even though budget policy has been my vocation and my hobby for fifty years, I recognize that it is not the only consideration in the choice of a president. Other things—especially the quality of the person—are important.

Our great budget problem lies ahead, in the next generation, when providing Social Security and Medicare for the baby-boomers threatens huge budget deficits. My preferred policy would be to reach a budget surplus quickly, to reduce the debt in the window of opportunity we have before the baby-boomers retire, and so reduce the debt burden the next generation will face. To achieve that, I would make all the expenditure cuts Bob Dole has proposed—without cutting taxes. I oppose Dole's 15 percent across-the-board cut not because I want to hold government expenditures up, but because I want to hold government debt down. To this end, I would reduce entitlement growth by limiting the cost-of-living adjustments in Social Security and by means-testing Medicare.

Neither candidate is running on my program. Both promise to balance the budget by the year 2002. President Clinton came to this position late, reluctantly, and under political pressure. It is true that the deficit has declined on his watch, and he deserves some credit for that.

But although Clinton, like many presidents before him, wanted to be seen as reducing the deficit, I don't believe he will do what it takes to eliminate it, let alone to generate a surplus. Forced to present a budget balanced by 2002, Clinton relied on suspiciously optimistic assumptions about economic growth and interest rates. He also submitted a contingency budget, to take effect if the rosy forecasts did not come true. But this contingency budget relied heavily on steps to be taken after Clinton's retirement in 2000, including the highly unlikely reversal of a tax cut proposed in that very budget.

This performance does not suggest a president dedicated to balancing the budget. Whether the plans presented by the congressional Republicans were more sincere and realistic I am unable to say. But I don't expect as much of them, or of their leader, Senator Dole. The Congress is a big committee of persons, each with limited knowledge and interests. The president alone has access to all the information, controls all the departments and is supposed to take into account all the different interests in the nation. That is why we established, seventy-five years ago, the Executive Budget system. That is why I hold the president responsible.

During the past four years, the president had a responsibility to alert the nation to the fiscal and economic crisis that lies ahead and to suggest ways of dealing with it. The president was aware of the crisis, or at least his advisers were. But they buried discussion of it in an appendix to the budget document that no one but a few economists read. And in this appendix they made quite incredible projections about the way the president's program would solve the problem, mainly through controlling the cost of Medicare without limiting benefits.

No one can be sure how a President Dole would deal with the budget problem, but he has a long record of deep concern over it, as something to act upon and not only to talk about when people are listening. So, after observing Bill Clinton's failures in this area, I'll take my chances with Dole.

But judging a candidate based solely on his position on the deficit, or on any other set of issues before us at this moment, is shortsighted. The next president will encounter problems neither he nor anyone else can now foresee. Our only clue as to how he'll react is his character.

Bill Clinton is an intelligent and compassionate man. I would be happy to have him as a friend or neighbor. But he is prone to foolish mistakes. Every president, like every person, makes mistakes. But foolish mistakes are ones that could have been anticipated. There is something in Bill Clinton—some odd combination of naïveté and conceit—that leads him to commit them.

The greatest, of course, was his health care plan. He invested most of a year and a good deal of political capital in it. But he should have known it wouldn't be adopted and, if adopted, wouldn't work. And, while I cannot easily untangle the mess of Whitewater, the travel office, FBI files and missing records, there is much that seems clearly injudicious for a national leader—too much risk for too little possible gain.

Even on subjects where I respect Clinton's motives and principles I think he made foolish mistakes. To raise the status of blacks in America did not require appointing Joycelyn Elders Surgeon General. To promote equal rights for women does not require that women serve combat duty on aircraft carriers.

I do not think Senator Dole will make such mistakes. He is sometimes called a "compromiser," as if that were a term of reproach. But the country needs compromise—not splitting the difference between right and wrong, but recognizing the merits of opposing positions and reconciling the strongest points of each.

On a number of issues the country is deeply divided. It is not just that some people believe A and some people believe B. A great many people, probably a large majority, believe both A and B. The very people who believe people should not be discriminated against because they are white also believe we should try to correct the disadvantage that still exists for black Americans. The people who believe we should not subsidize children to have children also believe we should not allow the children's children to suffer. Those revolted by the thought of abortion are also revolted at the thought of the government controlling a woman's most intimate decision.

We need a leader who will help us resolve these conflicts—not by planting his flag firmly on one side of the conflict and ignoring opposition, but not by papering over choices that must be made, either. Bob Dole will try to accommodate the most vital aspects of each position, while accepting that he cannot accommodate all aspects of each position. He knows that no one, including himself, has a monopoly of wisdom or virtue. He has been a hero on the battlefield; he has no need for heroics in the Rose Garden. He knows he cannot make the world perfect. But he thinks that he can make it a little better. I think he can, too.

HERBERT STEIN

HERBERT STEIN, Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers under Presidents Nixon and Ford, is a Senior Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute.

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Meet the real David Irving.

OUT TO LUNCH

By Jacob Heilbrunn

David Irving is traveling through the United States this month to promote his new biography of Nazi propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels. He has had to lug his own copies across the Atlantic. In April, after *New York Times* columnist Frank Rich, among others, denounced Irving as "Hitler's Spin Artist," Thomas McCormack, the chairman of St. Martin's Press, suddenly canceled publication of Irving's latest book, *Goebbels: Mastermind of the Third Reich.* A British historian who views Nazism with nostalgia, Irving has begun to depict himself as a victim of an international conspiracy aimed at suppressing him and his works.

Irving's difficulties have elicited sympathy from some unexpected quarters. Writing in the June *Vanity Fair*, Christopher Hitchens dismissed Irving's critics as "hysterical and oldmaidish" and hailed Irving as a "great historian of Fascism." Even more surprisingly, Gordon Craig, the dean of German historians, also weighed in on Irving's behalf. In the September 19 *New York Review of Books*, Craig reminded his readers that historical truth is not engraved in stone. Like Hitchens, he depicted Irving as a serious historian with a few eccentric views about the Holocaust. Figures such as Irving play a key role in new scholarship, Craig wrote, "and we dare not disregard their views."

I took Craig's admonition to heart. When Irving appeared at an advertised luncheon in his honor at the Polo India Club Restaurant in Washington on September 15, I went. A few weeks earlier Irving had sent a letter to TNR promising a copy of his Goebbels biography and saying, "I am also arranging for a copy of my somewhat scurrilous and irregular personal newsletter *Action Report* to be shipped to you from Key West." The July 1996 *Action Report* contained letters from readers about Jews expressing sentiments such as "by using the word Holocaust they can subjugate whole nations to pander to their every whim—even trivial things such as the incident recently at the Palace Pier in Brighton with the word Zyklon on one of the helter skelters."

It also excerpted "A Last Letter from One of Our Number" by Reinhold Elstner, a 75-year-old Wermacht veteran who immolated himself in Munich on April 26, 1995. Elstner wrote that "50 years of judicial Zionist revenge are enough" and that the "concentration camps at Theresienstadt and Buchenwald even had bordellos for the inmates." Perhaps the most notable feature of the *Action Report* was Irving's own running diary in which he called Elstner a "hero." My curiosity piqued, I phoned the number listed for more information about Irving's luncheon and was heartily welcomed by one Andrew L. Gray, a Washington rentier who was hosting the event.

I arrived at twelve o'clock sharp to find Irving arranging his books for sale across from a framed self-portrait by Hitler he had brought for the occasion. Andrew, puckishly clad in a white painter's jacket and sipping a glass of white wine, was holding forth about the indignity of Irving having to peddle his own work: "It's like van Gogh being forced to creep through the streets" at night with his paintings. In all, there were about fifteen of us: a gym instructor from Bethesda, an elderly German couple and several nondescript men who might have been mid-level government bureaucrats.

As we milled around Irving, he unleashed a litany of complaints: Bernard Levin of *The Times of London* had libeled him in a recent column without using Irving's name; Deborah Lipstadt, the author of *Denying the Holocaust*, he planned to sue in England. The real object of his wrath that day, though, was the Jewish Board of Deputies in London. "They're the ones who sent the report to Canada that ended up in my being deported in handcuffs," Irving said, "by an immigration official who looked like a real immigrant."

Until now, a certain decorum still obtained. But, once we sat down to lunch, wine loosened the atmosphere, and Irving's followers began peppering him with questions and offering their own impassioned comments about German history. Irving himself soon launched into a discussion of the number of Jews who died at Auschwitz. He ridiculed accounts of human soap and lampshades, calling them propaganda, whereupon a thirtyish woman in a gray business suit interjected, "Who would want to wash with a Jew, anyway?"

Someone asked about the Nazi-confiscated gold in Swiss bank accounts that Jews are trying to reclaim. "Now that the Jews have exhausted their lust and greed for animate objects," said Irving, "they have turned them on inanimate objects." If you look at his books, he confided, the word gold is always in capitals. The publishers always send it back lowercase, he chuckled, and he crosses it out and makes it uppercase. "Good Lord," responded Andrew, "they can take over all of Switzerland" if they invested just a million dollars in 1945. "The Kol Nidre will become the national anthem."

During a lull in the conversation, I asked Irving about a comment he'd made earlier: that critics saw the message of his new book as, in Thomas McCormack's words, "the Jews brought it on themselves." Irving paused. The first boycott of Jewish-owned businesses was preceded, he explained, "by a Jewish declaration of war on Germany. The Nazis were simply retaliating." Anyway, he added in a mocking tone, Goebbels called the boycott for April 1, which was the Jewish Sabbath. He was simply trying to get them to obey their own faith.

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Irving couldn't stay on track for long, though. He soon began to brood again about the influence Jews had brought to bear to prevent his book from being published by St. Martin's. And the media were out to get him, too, he said. Irving recounted an interview with a Scottish journalist named Chaim Bermant. ("Chaim!" the man next to me ejaculates.) Irving chided himself for "assuming he was just another writer despite his glasses, hook nose and beard down to his chest."

"The Jews," said Irving, "must have hated every word of" Gordon Craig's review of his book. Six pages in *The New York Review of Books*, he lamented, and the Goebbels biography couldn't even find a publisher in the U.S. At that, the gym teacher became visibly agitated. "When is this arm-twisting going to be exposed? When is it going to stop?" he cried out. Andrew sighed: "It used to be that old Yankees controlled those firms. But that's all gone now. It's all gone." Irving said he couldn't help noticing that the letters from publishers in New York are more and more often signed with names like "Goldberg." Why not go with a publisher other than the New York ones? asked a white-haired man who looked like a colonel from the Raj. "No," Irving replied, "I will not do that. I can't go to a lesser publisher. That means giving in to the enemy."

The enemy. Irving did not need to spell out to his acolytes who that was. His Goebbels biography with its references to Auschwitz as just a "slave-labor camp," its description of the bombing of Hamburg as a "Holocaust," its tendency to speak from Goebbels's and Hitler's viewpoints, makes it abundantly clear who the enemies are and who the heroes.

The book is full of color photos—of Hitler, of Himmler, of Nazi regalia and of Goebbels's various inamoratas. "Lovely photos, lovely photos," as Irving tells us during lunch. A sexual tone often creeps in—"A Blonde in the Archives" is the title of one chapter. Throughout, Irving enlists the reader's sympathies for the regime and its members. His concluding scene is really a set piece that portrays Goebbels and his wife in the most flattering light possible. Irving sentimentally paints the scene of Magda Goebbels killing her six children before she and her husband commit suicide. "While Magda gently prized open each mouth, Stumpfegger gingerly crushed the phial.... Young Hellmut still had the wire brace around his upper teeth—they had always protruded just like his father's.... She rushed outside as soon as the sixth child, the youngest, had been dispatched and threw her arms around Günter Schwägermann's neck. The burly six-footer steadied her in his strong arms for a moment.... She fainted...."

In short, Irving's books cannot be divorced from the man and his historical mission. That mission is to normalize Hitler and Nazism so as to remove the unique stain of the Final Solution from Germany. The uniqueness of the stain has meant not only that postwar Germany has borne a special taint but that, since World War II, it has been taboo in the West to espouse anti-Semitism publicly. Irving's project is to smash this taboo.

Both Gordon Craig and Christopher Hitchens warn against suppressing Irving, against creating taboos. Craig maintains that "the fact is that he [Irving] knows more about National Socialism than most professionals in his field, and students of the years 1933-1945 owe more than they are willing to admit to his energy as a researcher and to the scope and vigor of his publications." In this interpretation, Irving might seem to resemble Mephistopheles's description of himself in Goethe's *Faust* as "part of a force that ever wills evil and always produces good."

But good history does not have to be produced by bad men. Challenges to the accepted historical verities have been produced by many scholars over the years, ranging from Fritz Fischer's 1961 *Germany's Grab For World Power*, which contended that Germany's aims in World War II differed little from its aims in World War I, to Richard Overy's new *Why the Allies Won*, which seeks to debunk the notion that an Allied victory was inevitable. A few years ago, the English scholar John Charmley created a stir when he argued that, far from being a great statesman, Winston Churchill was, in fact, a bumbler who destroyed the British empire by refusing to cut a deal with Hitler.

Scholars are constantly wrangling over every conceivable aspect of Germany history. These quarrels are themselves part of what David Blackbourn and Geoff Eley have termed the peculiarities of German history. Irving has made no contributions to these debates. Though Craig appears to have softened his views of Irving, he himself trenchantly observed in his 1982 book *The Germans* that Irving "was inordinately proud of not having been trained professionally" and that his evidence of Hitler's guiltlessness was of "the flimsiest kind."

If revising British and American history has meant toppling heroes such as Churchill or Martin Luther King Jr. from their plinths, revisionism has taken on a rather different meaning when it comes to Germany. The statues have already been smashed. The challenge facing the would-be revisionist is to sweep the shards under the rug and attempt to start with a fresh mold. But as the symbol of human evil Auschwitz has resisted both denial and relativization.

Craig to the contrary, there are certain absolute truths in history, or at least truths that it is futile to dispute. We know that the Holocaust occurred. This is not a topic for debate. Why it occurred is another matter. When A.J.P. Taylor depicted Hitler as a normal statesman, he emphasized that he meant only until 1939. Irving sees it differently. That is his right. But a reputable publisher does not have a moral obligation to publish a book by him; to give Irving the patina of respectability that he craves, for a book, moreover, that contains no revelations about Goebbels and much misinformation.

Hitchens wrote that in meeting Irving "I learned a lot in the process of doing so." I learned nothing new about Nazism from David Irving. I did learn that his hatred of the Jews is bottomless. •

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SILVER MEDALISTS

By Michael Lewis

"I'm too old to cry."
—George McGovern, in his concession speech, November 7, 1972

September 27:

Once, during a brief stint working for a dealer of Old Master paintings, I was assigned to show pictures to Thomas Hoving, the former director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Hoving made a religion of first impressions. He'd stand with his back to me at one end of the showroom, staring into the wall, as I set the picture on the easel. When it was ready he'd swivel like a gunfighter and virtually shout the first three words that popped into his head: "*Sublime*! . . . *Tactile*! . . . *Fake*!"

When I met George McGovern today I thought of Thomas Hoving for the first time in years. Maybe because McGovern himself is sort of a living work of art. Or maybe it was just the noise of the adjectives—*Wise*! . . . *Decent*! . . . *Real*!—going off in my head. The man who drove Dr. Hunter S. Thompson mad with his inability to get himself across on the stump makes an overwhelming first impression, especially when you catch him on location. His office here in Washington is a kind of stage set crammed with mementos: a portrait bust of Kennedy, McGovern presidential campaign posters, pictures of McGovern with (I almost wrote "other") presidents, photographs of McGovern's daughter whose death after years of alcoholism McGovern recently chronicled in his sad book, *Terry*. The effect is talismanic, as if keeping these objects around allows him to control and redefine the original experience. It is the same impulse that leads a man to write memoirs or to speak to young people who have no memory of distant events, McGovern's two principal occupations these days.

Once we are seated across a coffee table from each other, McGovern offers me what amounts to a loser's tour of presidential campaigns. "I have to live with the knowledge that, not only did I lose the election, but I lost it to the most discredited man ever to occupy the White House," he once wrote, and you can see how much work has gone into managing this knowledge. "You feel sort of personally repudiated," he says now. "It's not really true. People love you. But you have to grapple with that. In some respects it is like a death in the family." Maybe for this reason McGovern has formed what sounds suspiciously like a support group with other losing presidential candidates. "I ran into Walter Mondale," he says, ". . . what was it . . . sometime around 1989. He said to me, 'George, you are the only person alive who can answer this question: How long does it take before it quits hurting after you've lost forty-nine of fifty states?' I said, 'Well, Walter, I'll let you know when I get there.' " Both Gerald Ford and Barry Goldwater are now McGovern's friends. ("After I lost," says McGovern, "Barry wrote me a letter that said, 'Dear George, If you must lose, lose *big*.' That letter gave me the first big lift I had after the election.")

I decide to come clean, as delicately as possible. As Clinton races around seducing everyone he meets, Dole seems bent mainly on keeping his tan. The long weekends lounging outside his sterile condominium in Florida are punctuated only briefly during the week by light day trips on the East Coast. His staffers tell me that Dole plans to fly to San Diego *three* days before the second debate, "to adjust to the time zone." In reading about the McGovern campaign, I was struck by the similarity of his reaction to incipient political disaster. "At a street corner rally in Philadelphia that (last) morning, George McGovern had hoarsely spoken his favorite words from Isaiah," wrote Timothy Crouse:

> "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint." A number of reporters had bitten their lips to keep from crying. For George McGovern grew stronger and calmer as his staffers grew more desolate. The reporters could not help being awed by his incredible serenity.

"Do presidential candidates quit?" I ask.

"I didn't," McGovern says, then quick as a flash vanishes into the past. "It is discouraging, but I never got demoralized. The news story would be that George McGovern took his failing campaign to California in a desperate attempt to revive his political career, but that's not what you see. I can still see those hands by the thousands and those faces and those tears and those cheers. And that pulls you up." And then, interestingly, he segues into his view of Dole and his campaign. "He's better than people know," he says. "He'd make a fine president. But his campaign appears to be frozen—it's almost as if he were frozen in time."

On June 11 Dole spoke his final words on the floor of the Senate. The speech was a rambling but moving collection of memories, one of which concerned McGovern. It is worth quoting as much for what it says about the way Dole processes his experience as it does about McGovern:

> I have also been proud to be involved in nutrition programs. Somebody mentioned that earlier today. I remember working with Senator McGovern on that, and there was a conservative article saying I cannot be a conservative because I know George McGovern. I think George McGovern is a gentleman and has always been a gentleman. But we worked together on Food Stamps. I will confess, when I made my first tour with George McGovern, I said, "This guy is running for president?" I was not convinced. There were a lot of skeptics in this Chamber; probably some on each side. You cannot have truer motives. It is always something political. But, after being on that trip about two or three days, I changed my mind.

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Although it reads like the rantings of a lunatic, it is just Dole thinking aloud to himself, as usual, one sentence at a time. Still, you can't help feeling that the whole purpose of the passage was to give Dole a chance to say that George McGovern is a gentleman; that is how McGovern interpreted the remarks, and he is clearly still touched by them. "It came to me completely as a surprise," he says. "Dole never called me and told me he was going to do it."

Then McGovern remembers something else that, he thinks, might explain Dole's tribute. "I saw him fall once," he says. "On the tracks of the shuttle under the Senate. He lit on that withered arm of his. He was obviously in pain; his body was twitching. I helped him get up. You know when you lose the use of an arm it throws off your balance. *You can't break the fall.* And while I was helping him I said, 'Oh, Bob, this really is *too* bad.' And he looked at me in a way I hadn't seen. There was genuine friendship in his eyes."

Everyone who has run for president seems to have some special connection to the others. As McGovern walks me to the door I tell him I saw him on television at the Democratic convention, sitting in the rafters eating out of a bucket of popcorn with Michael Dukakis. "What'd you talk about?" I asked. "Oh," he says, "how Clinton is so much smarter than we are. How well he's masked some of his liberal views. . . . "

September 30:

> "I hope many of you will go into politics and public service. It is a noble profession, a noble profession."
> Audience: " '92! '92! '92! '92! '92! '92!"
> —Michael Dukakis, in his concession speech, November 8, 1988

The outside of the dun brick building at Northeastern University is lined with dustbins while the inside is lined with professors of political science, one of whom is Michael Dukakis. The man himself occupies the corner office on the third floor, and as I walk to it I am faintly embarrassed for him, thinking no, this couldn't be where he has ended up. But it is.

"Where is his main office?" I ask his (part-time) assistant as the strains of Dukakis's voice emanate from the open door a few feet away.

"This *is* his main office," she says.

I let that settle in. There is no indication that I am in the right place except for a plaque, tucked at the back of a cluttered bookcase.

> Jaw Joints and Allied Musculu-Skeletal Disorder Foundation Wishes to Honor Michael Dukakis

"Do a lot of journalists come to interview him?" I ask.

"No . . . not very often," she says. Then she adds, "Sometimes they call."

That fact lingers in the air, begging for elaboration.

"Because, you know, this time of year they want him on some of the shows."

"*Hi, howahya?*" It's him. In the flesh. With his hand out. Not for the first time since I started doing this job I take pleasure in finding a man who almost went all the way who is shorter than I am. *A lot* shorter. I wonder if maybe America wouldn't be well served by a short president, a man we could all look down upon. It might lower expectations.

I follow Dukakis into his office, where he asks me what I take in my coffee. "Just milk," I say, prompting him to grab for a pair of mugs and a carton of nondairy creamer. "My life is nothing but a bunch of powders these days," he says, then takes off down the hall to make the coffee, leaving me alone in his corner office with a few long rows of books about health care.

A number of thoughts pass through my brain, but the one that sticks is: *He hasn't cashed in.* Up and down K Street former politicians are growing fat selling off pieces of their prestige. Dukakis, if he wished, could have installed himself in a fancy office with a fancy salary. And yet he chooses to be here. The effect could not have been more powerful if he were wearing a hair shirt.

"Okay," he says, handing over the powdered coffee. "Tell me about yourself." I do, sort of, concluding with some vague reason for being in his office.

"*If* I knew anything about presidential campaigns I wouldn't be here," he says, cheerfully. "I'd be finishing eight successful years in the White House."

I tell him that the first thing I don't understand is how when people look back on a campaign's defining moments they are always pointing to ridiculously trivial events. Just yesterday, for instance, *The New York Times* ran a piece saying that Dukakis lost the debates when he shook hands with Bush and showed the audience just how much shorter he was. "Absolutely ridiculous," he says. "That had nothing to do with anything, in my judgment." But then I mention Willie Horton and the picture of him in the tank. "Bush was in a tank three times," he says, defensively, neglecting to consider that Bush never was compared to Rocky The Flying Squirrel.

It's hard to think of a man whose life was turned upside down by a campaign as Michael Dukakis's was in 1988. He didn't just lose; he was destroyed. When he came home the next day he found that his state hated him as governor and his wife was swallowing diet pills. And yet the day after his loss—which Dukakis thought was entirely due to Bush's nasty campaign—Dukakis was asked if he could forgive James Baker, Bush's campaign manager. "Mr. Dukakis replied with a rare touch of humor," ran the account in *The New York Times.* " 'I believe in the redemption of souls,' he said." Back in 1988 I was still an ordinary, well-adjusted person with only a passing interest in presidential campaigns. But even then that phrase got my attention, both for its felicity and for its sangfroid. Is it possible to lose so terribly, I wondered, and not feel a thing?

I keep trying to take the conversation in the direction of Phil Donahue—Let Me Feel Your Pain!—while Dukakis keeps dragging it back to *The Issues.* "My preference was to come up with a national version of the Hawaii health system," he says, typically. "Did you know that Hawaii is the only state with universal care?" I didn't. The man is full of passion. It's just that he lacks

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passion for ordinary things, the sort of things that inspire passion in ordinary people.

The phone rings; Dukakis quickly picks it up. "What? We need a disk for you guys?" Dukakis is saying. "Okay, okay. We're going to try to get it for you." I feel almost embarrassed watching this. I am staring at a man who believes that the only thing between him and the White House was a decent strategy for defusing attack ads, and he is answering his own phone. It occurs to me that former political bigshots scramble for the golden phones of K Street not only for the money but also to disguise the fall they have taken—so that they don't have to be pitied by assholes like me who come to place flowers on their grave.

"Have you read that little book over there?" he asks, pointing to his well-thumbed copy of *Putting People First*, Clinton's manifesto from the last campaign. "You should read it. I re-read it from time to time." I ponder the implications of anyone not reading but *re*-reading *Putting People First* as I pull the copy down and page through it. The chapter headings are checked in pencil though there is only one passage marked, under the section about energy efficiency on page 98:

> INCREASE U.S. RELIANCE ON NATURAL GAS—WHICH IS INEXPENSIVE, CLEAN-BURNING AND ABUNDANT, AND CAN REDUCE CARBON DIOXIDE EMISSIONS—BY ISSUING AN EXECUTIVE ORDER TO PURCHASE NATURAL GAS POWERED VEHICLES FOR THE FEDERAL AUTOMOTIVE FLEET, FOLLOWING TEXAS'S LEAD.

The phone rings again. This time when he hangs up I am ready with a question. He had learned all about the importance of responding to attack ads in 1978, when he lost the governorship of Massachusetts, so why wasn't he ready for them when he ran for president? "That's a good question," he says. "I can't answer that question." Not only does he think he could have been president; he doesn't know why he didn't do what it would have taken to be president. That's the sort of interpretation of events that could kill a man. But it seems barely to have registered in Dukakis.

"Poor Dole," he says, suddenly. "Once you win the nomination there's a walling off that takes place. I found it frustrating. Any time I wanted to talk to constituents, buy a suit, buy groceries, I was walled off by the Secret Service. Clinton was asked what he thought about living in the White House and he described it as the 'crown jewel of the federal corrections system.' It drove me *up a wall*. I look at Dole and I think it's *killing* him. Then all of a sudden you fall off a platform and it becomes a three-day story. *And it becomes a metaphor for your entire campaign.*"

The phone rings *again*; again Dukakis picks it up. "Hello, who is this? No. They *canceled* the lunch."

Although I know I am wasting my time and his I ask Dukakis if he ever loses sleep over his loss. Of course he says he doesn't. "Look, I had my shot and I blew it." The amazing thing is: I believe him. The preternatural rationality that kept Michael Dukakis from being president enables him not to dwell on his loss. If there is a less useful role model for Dole—or for that matter for Clinton—I can't think of who he is. •

The post-liberal Democrats.

MIDDLE MARCH

By John B. Judis

When the GOP took Congress in 1994, it wasn't only Republicans who began speaking of revolution and realignment; Democrats too believed that the earth had shifted beneath them. The upheaval was thought to be both ideological and demographic. Because many of the defeated Democrats were from the party's moderate or even conservative wing, what remained of the party seemed to have moved further to the left, presenting voters in the future with a much starker choice. Democrats looked like they had lost their base in the South, where they were now influential in only a handful of majority black districts.

But, so far, this year's congressional elections are proving these perceptions wrong. Most Democratic candidates for the House are not running on the left, but in the center—against the Republican "extremists." And, while the Democrats stand to make their greatest gains in the North and the Far West, they may well recapture some Southern districts. The South will continue to veer Republican but not as sharply as it seemed two years ago.

As a group, the Democratic challengers represent an eclectic mix of Old and New Democrat. They support the welfare reform bill that Bill Clinton signed and embrace the idea of a balanced budget. They are in favor of capital punishment and leery of affirmative action. But they also attack the Republican reductions in spending

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on health care, education and the environment. In the cities and suburbs of the Far West and North, they advocate abortion rights and gun control. But in some Southern rural districts they could easily win the support of the Christian Coalition and the National Rifle Association.

Typical of these 1996 Democrats is Bill Pascrell, the popular mayor of Paterson, New Jersey, who is challenging Republican Representative Bill Martini in the Eighth District. Like many districts of the Northeast, New Jersey's Eighth—which patchworks together urban and minority Paterson, the white working-class suburbs of Belleville and the prosperous suburbs of West Orange—was solidly Democratic until the '80s, when upscale suburbanites and disgruntled white working-class voters gave Republicans an opening. In 1994, Martini just squeaked by Herb Klein, a one-term Democrat. Though Martini is a pro-choice, pro-gun control Republican—probably the only kind who could have won in this district—he initially allied himself with Newt Gingrich and the Contract with America, unwittingly creating an inviting target in this year's campaign.

As the Democrats began jockeying to challenge Martini, party leaders, including those on the left, decided to close ranks behind Pascrell. To them he represented, as one of them explained, the "pragmatic" choice. Pascrell, the 59-year-old son of Italian immigrants, has presided successfully for two terms over a city with a black and Hispanic majority and seemingly intractable economic and social problems. As a part-time state assemblyman, he also represents several surrounding suburbs.

In his speeches, Pascrell attacks Martini for voting to cut Medicare, student loans and the Earned Income Tax Credit. "They are cutting what they should be protecting, and protecting what they should be cutting," he says. He wants fair trade and flays tax laws that encourage corporations to move overseas. But, unlike many congressional Democrats, Pascrell supports a balanced budget amendment and a capital gains tax cut. He enthusiastically backs welfare reform, and thinks Clinton should have promoted it much earlier. "I wouldn't have gotten into gay rights and the military. I would have jumped into welfare," he says. As a politician who represents both the city and the suburbs, Pascrell has had to think a lot about reconciling the two constituencies. He opposes programs that "take money from the working class and give it to the poor." He favors racial integration but says "you can't force it down people's throat."

Pascrell embodies the urban, ethnic side of the 1996 Democrat. Another new species, found in middle- and upper-middle-class Northern and Western suburbs, is the fiscally conservative female Democrat who presents herself as pro-choice, pro-family and pro-business. Three stand out among this year's House challengers. In a district stretching from Lansing to the Detroit suburbs, Debbie Stabenow, a former state senator, is running against freshman Dick Chrysler. In northern California's upscale suburban Tenth District, Ellen Tauscher, a former investment banker, is pitted against two-term Republican Bill Baker. In Orange County, Loretta Sanchez, a financial consultant and former Republican, is challenging GOP wildman Robert Dornan. Each stands to take advantage of the political middle opened up by the Republican budget cuts and by the party's coziness with the Christian right.

In their campaign literature, none of these candidates advertises herself as a Democrat. Stabenow calls herself a "voice for middle-class families." Tauscher describes herself as a "caring and successful businesswoman." Sanchez's literature shows her at age 10 standing next to an Anaheim squad car after winning an essay contest on community policing. Though Tauscher favors a balanced budget amendment and Stabenow boasts of her support for property tax cuts and business deregulation, all three are strongly pro-choice and attack the Republicans on Medicare, the environment and education. Stabenow, whose district has an edge in Democratic registration, stands the best chance of winning, and Tauscher and Sanchez have mounted credible campaigns in districts thought to be safely Republican.

In the South, Democrats are faring better than expected. Since the 1994 election, five Southern Democratic House members have switched parties, and another six have either retired or left to run for Senate. Yet, of these eleven open seats, Democrats have conceded only three to the Republicans—two in Texas and one in Mississippi. Democrats stand a chance of taking back one Republican seat in Florida, Louisiana and Texas and two in Georgia and North Carolina. They are running most strongly in districts with plenty of low-income voters and senior citizens and in New South districts (such as those in North Carolina's research triangle) where voters are wary of the Christian Coalition.

In most of these districts, Democratic challengers are promising to defend Medicare and student loans against the Gingrich Republicans, while steering clear of the national party's stands on social issues and its image of feminine caring. In small-town southern Georgia, attorney David Bell is running against incumbent Charlie Norwood, a freshman Republican, in a district that, thanks to redistricting, has gone from 18 percent black in 1994 to 36 percent black today. The sober, 46-year-old Bell, a graduate of Georgia Military Academy and of the Citadel, sounds a lot like Sam Nunn. "The values I learned from the army, the Citadel, my church, my family and my work form the backbone of my campaign for Congress," he declared in a debate with Norwood. He's not running as a Democrat, Bell says, in a turn of phrase that is becoming more and more of a Democratic mantra this year, but as an "independent voice."

Some Democratic candidates have been happily accommodating themselves to the most socially conservative views of their rural districts. In the contest for retiring Democrat Charlie Rose's seat in eastern North Carolina, for example, Democrat Mike McIntyre is running as a pro-life, anti-gun control conservative. And in a rural-suburban district stretching from the Austin to the Houston suburbs, where a trial lawyer confusingly named "Lefty" Morris is facing former Republican Representative Ron Paul, traditional party lines get even

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more tangled. Paul is an eccentric libertarian and Morris is actually running to his right. Trying to shake his childhood nickname, he is campaigning on the slogan "LEFTY IS RIGHT" and attacking Paul for his permissive views on drugs and crime.

Why have the Democrats, given up for dead after November 1994, been able to recruit viable, if sometimes heterodox, candidates in these swing districts? One reason is obvious. Under Gingrich, Republicans became too closely identified with Christian fundamentalism and with a hard-hearted fiscal radicalism that appeared to threaten the foundations of Social Security. Many moderate Democrats like Stabenow or Bell who might have been tempted to cross party lines suddenly saw a large unclaimed constituency in the political center. Meanwhile, moderate Republicans like Martini, who might have secured their hold on their districts, became vulnerable because of their association with Gingrich.

At the same time, House Minority Leader Richard Gephardt pushed the Democrats to adopt a "big tent" strategy aimed at winning back the House. Instead of advancing ambitious programs that could split House Democrats, Gephardt focused on attacking Republican bills on the environment, education, Medicare, pensions and property rights. Last June, Gephardt and Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle produced a campaign agenda, "Families First," that showcased modest policy reforms such as pension portability and the Kennedy-Kassebaum health care bill. And Gephardt went out of his way to assure the "Blue Dogs"—the Southern Democrats who survived the 1994 election—that they were welcome in the party, inviting Blue Dogs such as Tennessee Representative John Tanner to daily leadership meetings.

Through the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Gephardt and the House leadership threw their support behind candidates like Pascrell, Stabenow and Bell whose "good fit with their districts" gave them the best chance of winning. When Stabenow visited Capitol Hill last January Gephardt described her contest with Chrysler as "one of the handful of races that are going to set the tone." But he pointedly denied that she would be running on the party's platform. "This is a race between Debbie and Dick," Gephardt said. "It's not a race between Newt Gingrich and Dick Gephardt."

The most important Democratic constituency group, the AFL-CIO, has followed a similar big tent strategy. Last February, its member unions voted to spend $35 million on the election. The federation has already spent over $10 million running ads in districts where House Republicans are vulnerable. Rather than focusing on whether the Republican incumbent opposes, say, labor's bill banning striker replacement, the campaign spots highlight how he or she voted on broader issues like Medicare, the minimum wage, student loans and pensions. And some of the Democrats they're helping are by no means favorites of the labor movement. The AFL-CIO has run ads attacking Stabenow's opponent, Dick Chrysler, despite the fact that Stabenow defied local labor leaders by granting interviews to *The Detroit Free Press* and *Detroit News*, which have replaced their striking workers.

Will the Democrats actually be able to add the twenty new members they need to win back the House? In their favor are the quality of their candidates, the Republicans' association with the universally unpopular Gingrich and Clinton's enviable poll ratings. In the Republicans' favor are the number of open Democratic seats: thirty compared to twenty-three open Republican seats, many of which are in dyed-in-the-wool GOP districts.

So far, though, the signs for Democrats have been auspicious. When Louisiana and Washington held open primaries last month, Democrats showed surprising strength in both states. In the Cajun wetlands of southern Louisiana, two Democrats bested all the Republicans for the seat occupied by Jimmy Hayes, who became a Republican in 1995 and ran unsuccessfully for Senate this year. In Washington, Democrats positioned themselves to knock off as many as six GOP incumbents. Put these results together with major gains expected in California, Ohio and New England, and you have a narrow Democratic majority in the House.

Then, however, the real problems will begin. If Democrats do win back the House, and if Gephardt becomes speaker, it will be partly because of moderates and mavericks like Stabenow, Tauscher and Bell. Gephardt and his second-in-command, David Bonior, will have as much trouble ignoring them as Gingrich and Dick Armey had ignoring the Republican freshmen of 1994. He will have to find ways to accommodate them and the Southern Blue Dogs. According to top Democrats on Capitol Hill, Gephardt already knows this and is making plans.

The first kinds of concessions will be procedural. Gephardt is planning to open the leadership process to accommodate the Blue Dogs. Only Texan Charles Stenholm is a possibility for the House leadership, but Gephardt will probably employ a steering committee to make sure that other moderates and Blue Dogs regularly participate in decisions. Gephardt will likely continue with his strategy of avoiding ambitious programs—like health care reform—that have the potential to split the party, in favor of the "incrementalist" agenda anticipated in "Families First." Says one Democrat close to Gephardt, "We don't want to get involved in pendulum politics, repealing everything that they did. We have to do small but definable things."

But, as the party wrestles with the promise of a balanced budget, this strategy may not be enough to stave off the kind of fractiousness that has afflicted the Republicans this year. Gephardt and the Democrats will have to develop a political agenda that transcends rather than simply accommodates the differences between the different wings of the party. In New Jersey's Eighth District, Pascrell talks of "building bridges" between the city and the suburbs. If the Democrats recapture the House, Gephardt and the leadership will be busy building bridges within their party, too. •

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THE HARD QUESTIONS

Bad terms

Would I prefer Bill Clinton in the White House to Bob Dole?

Yes.

Does it make much difference?

Not a lot.

Do I intend to vote for Clinton?

No.

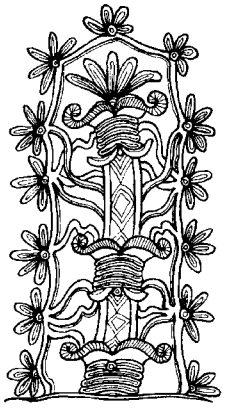
Here's why. The purpose of an election is to express a choice. This presumes two things. First, that there is a real difference between the candidates. Second, that the voter feels strongly enough about the choice to participate. If you don't believe that it much matters—either because the winner seems a bygone conclusion, or because you find the candidates largely identical—why bother? This is not merely my problem. Half the electorate apparently shares it.

For as long as I can remember I have heard how shameful it is that so few Americans vote. The figure, which has been drifting lower for years, now hovers around 50 percent for national elections—lower for state and local ones. The low turnout can only mean that many Americans don't think voting makes much difference. The middle class, to which both parties pander, sees each as equally beholden to its interests. The alienated poor figure they get screwed either way and vote only when one of their champions, like Jesse Jackson, runs. Political scientists assume that non-voters don't understand the way our democracy works. Maybe they understand all too well.

Celebrationist pundits assure us that mirror-image candidates competing for a fraction of the electorate reflects the genius of the American system. On the main points of American democracy, we are assured, there is consensus. Thus, elections are not primarily the means for a change of priorities and a transfer of power, but an inspiring affirmation of citizenship, like the Fourth of July.

Of course the parties do differ at the margins, on the edges, in their nuances. Republicans are the party of business; they champion opportunity even when it means great inequality. Democrats, in their hearts if not always in their actions, try to smooth out capitalism's rougher edges. Because I am a liberal on economic issues (and unlike Clinton, not ashamed of the label), I tend to favor the Democrats.

But none of these old arguments will make me pull the lever for Bill Clinton this time. For one thing, there is little reason to believe his second term would be any different from his first. In domestic policy, the past four years have been filled with equivocation and retreat. Clinton is by nature a compromiser. When confronted by opposition, particularly from authority figures, like Wall Street bankers and four-star generals, he caves. Compromise has taken him far. His willingness to shed inconvenient skins, to preempt the center and even the right rather than fight for principle, has brought him back from the political dead and boxed poor Dole into a corner.



Clinton apologists maintain that in his second term the president will be what he promised to be in his first. If re-elected, we are told, he will revise the very welfare bill he signed, taking out its most savage parts. (This novel pro-Clinton argument might be summarized as: "Support me before I strike again.") But even freed of re-election concerns, Clinton will still give in rather than suffer through bruising battles against entrenched interests. Abandonment of principle is a habit he has internalized.

Bill Clinton came into office pledging to train American workers to compete in the global marketplace, to protect their wages from being driven down to Third World levels, to guarantee health insurance for everyone, to eliminate tax incentives for firms that export American jobs overseas, and to remove foreign trade barriers to our exports. To achieve these initiatives would have meant building coalitions to confront powerful industrial, financial and foreign-financed lobbies.

He has not done any of that. Serious worker retraining was dropped in the first budget because it was deemed too expensive, health care imploded, NAFTA precipitated a job flight to Mexico, and Japan and China still have not opened their markets to American goods. Like the bankers and bond marketeers whose advice he follows, Clinton shows more concern for inflation and balanced budgets than for job growth. Despite his promises to protect the working class, this president has consistently retreated under pressure from Wall Street, business lobbies and trade groups. On most counts it is hard to see how much difference it has made that Clinton, rather than Bush, was elected four years ago.

A second reason for standing aside is that, if we are to believe the polls, Clinton will get re-elected anyway. Why should skeptics like me make the margin greater? If Clinton thinks the verdict on his first term is overwhelmingly positive, he'll use it to rationalize a second term that offers more of the same.

Clinton, more than any president in memory, responds to pressure. Unlike Reagan or Carter or Johnson, he has no inner core of beliefs. He wants to be loved and to do good, in that order. He will, as he has demonstrated, take for granted those he has won over and make accommodations to those who oppose him. He is constantly shifting his policies to defuse and embrace those on the other side. Although part of his charm is that he is not a fanatic, he is not the kind of man one would trustingly follow into battle.

The way to influence Clinton is not through acquiescence, but through pressure. The right wing of the Democratic Party understands this, and it has been successful in shifting his priorities (just as among the Republicans the far right has effectively captured the candidate and the party).

Those who want to move Clinton away from the center (there is no effective left in this country, and it is illusory to think of Clinton embracing one) and back toward his vestigial liberal instincts need to threaten as well as reward (something Jesse Jackson, Mario Cuomo and Ted Kennedy might have pondered before their effusive endorsements at the Chicago convention). Liberals have been co-opted by Clinton and taken for granted by a divided and hapless Democratic Party. They can hope to regain influence only if they take a leaf from the Christian Coalition in its winning campaign to capture the Republican Party. They must be willing to organize, to pressure, to circumvent the party leadership, to challenge, to withhold support and, if ignored, to stay home on Election Day. Only then are Clinton and the Democratic leadership likely to listen.

All my life I have accepted the argument that one should embrace the Lesser Evil. Instead of again making that dreary choice, this time I'm going to send a message to the Democrats by voting for Ralph Nader.

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Dealing With Artists

We're told that the art works supposedly by Picasso that appear in **Surviving Picasso** (Warner Bros.) are imitations. (The Picasso estate would not grant reproduction rights.) So is the film. Produced by Ismail Merchant and David L. Wolper, directed by James Ivory, it strives, with the usual Merchant-Ivory velvet intentions, for superior quality. Sometimes this team has succeeded, as with *Howards End* and *The Remains of the Day*. This time, however, it's nothing but upward yearnings.

The reason for this disappointment is strange. Some of the fumble might be in the placidity of Ivory's directing, which only occasionally shows inner warmth. Mostly the fault rests squarely on one of the best artists in film today. Anthony Hopkins, as Picasso, has not found his performance.

There's a BBC documentary called *The Epic That Never Was*, about the non-making of *I, Claudius*, with Charles Laughton in the lead. Throughout, we see clips of Laughton working on the part, dissatisfied, saying that he has not yet found it. The film was canceled for several reasons, but one of them was that Laughton felt he had never quite got a grip on the role. In *Surviving Picasso* it's almost possible to see Hopkins trying and trying, reaching for fingerholds, never quite grasping them. It's something like watching Laughton's struggle.

The biggest surprise is in the eyes. In endless photographs Picasso's eyes are startling. With Hopkins, never. Eye-popping wouldn't exactly have been wanted, but some kind of heightened intensity of the glance would have helped. Then there's the body. In all the photographs where Picasso's chest is more or less revealed—no shortage of these—he seems to threaten us with energy, to come *at* us. This never happens with Hopkins, which is all the more odd and disappointing in the actor who nearly ripped the screen apart as Nixon and as Hannibal Lecter (to name only two).

Hopkins, intelligent artist that he is, was, I guess, searching for the root of that energy—the genius of the man: the genius's conviction of his genius, his exultation in it, his tyranny with it, his consecration to it. But Hopkins hasn't found the way to create that deepest conviction, the assurance from which all else must grow or else seem mere decoration. Because of this, we're never even sufficiently persuaded of his power over women. That power was true of Picasso because he was Picasso; yet Hopkins, whose Lecter was scarily sexy, never truly heats the screen here.

Genius can't easily be conveyed by an actor. (Laughton, for one, came close in *Rembrandt*.) Unless an actor makes us believe in it, he is merely saying that he is Chopin or Mozart or Van Gogh or Michelangelo, with a bit of strumming or daubing as bona fides. There's a terrible problem for actors here, even the best of them. I've met a few geniuses in my life and saw or heard nothing in their behavior that marked them as such. And an actor is stuck with the behavior alone; the life is isolated from the work. Attempts to blend the two can be risible. I once saw a play about Wagner in which he was struggling to compose *Tristan*. At the end of Act Two he embraced Mathilde Wesendonk for the first time, broke from her, exclaimed "I've got it!" strode to the piano and whammed out the opening of the *Liebestod*. Nothing so gross happens in *Surviving Picasso*; still, Hopkins is out there all alone, so to speak, trying to convince us that he's a genius. My plaint is less in this default than in his lack of infectious volatility.

The film deals with the ten years when Françoise Gilot was in his life—she is the survivor of the title—and we generally see the story through her eyes. An English actress, Natascha McElhone, makes her film debut in the role and could hardly have had worse luck. The part is substantial and she is modestly sweet in it, but she is there to bring us Picasso. She is trampoline and mirror for the master—until she quits. Paradoxically, if Hopkins had done better in his role, McElhone would have seemed stronger: there would have been more point to her as slave and observer if the object of it were more formidable.

Ruth Prawer Jhabvala's screenplay suffers from fidelity. She got her facts from the biography of Picasso by Arianna Huffington, a book that some think dubious, but Jhabvala in any case has stuck to those facts. So the script is basically a chronicle: Françoise enters Picasso's life, has two children with him, finds out about the past and present and future women in his life, and leaves. (The last scene, with Françoise on the show horse in the bull ring, is true.) The many flarings, of love or anger, don't alter the nar-

FILMS WORTH SEEING

American Buffalo. *Dustin Hoffman and Dennis Franz fulfill—almost—the surrealistic patterns of mystery and anguish that underlie David Mamet's play set in a junkshop. (Reviewed 9/16 & 23/96)* **Looking for Richard.** *Al Pacino, who has played Richard III on stage, assembles friends and others for a freewheeling examination of the play and its performance. Lots of fun, despite the grim subject, with flashes of insight. (9/30/96)* **Maborosi.** *The husband of a young Japanese wife inexplicably commits suicide. The shadows touch her subsequent life. Done in an exquisitely gratifying visual style. (9/30/96)* **Secrets & Lies.** *A London domestic drama involving race, somewhat tidily concluded but richly performed under Mike Leigh's perceptive direction. (9/30/96)*—**SK**

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rative amble of the structure. Worse, not much could have been done credibly to cure it.

All the troubles begin, obviously, with Merchant-Ivory, who chose the material. They quite obviously elected to do *Jefferson In Paris* because of the alleged affair with Sally Hemings. Now, they can prate all they like about Picasso as the artist of the century: they chose him because he was a demonic lover. And they relied on Hopkins to bring it off. But all three have stranded one another.

What a lovely idea. A documentary about Al Hirschfeld. Susan W. Dryfoos has done it splendidly; and what's more, she has come up with a terrific title—**The Line King** (Castle Hill). Dryfoos, I assume, is of the Ochs-Sulzberger-Dryfoos family; she is an experienced documentary maker who heads a group devoted to historical data of *The New York Times*. Hirschfeld is a pretty important *Times* datum: for many decades, his delightful caricatures of theater and film people every Sunday have been much more memorable than most of the theater events they dealt with. Many of the people he has drawn—Zero Mostel, Carol Channing, Josephine Baker, dozens and dozens—seem more truly themselves in their Hirschfeld versions.

Dryfoos skillfully spins elements of Hirschfeld's life and work together, along with bright vignettes of his friends, affections, aversions, crochets and pleasures. And the score, arranged from lively Broadway show tunes, helps to keep things bouncing along.

Hirschfeld is now well into his 90s and has outlived some of the people we see in the film, including his (second) wife, the German-born actress Dolly Haas. Everyone we see speaks about Hirschfeld as his or her private property; but anything else, we feel, would be out of order. And we get to meet one of the best-known, least-glimpsed figures in contemporary culture, his daughter Nina. Hirschfeld explains how he began to work her name into his drawings when she was born and how he has (almost) never stopped. Sometimes the "Nina" is in the wrinkles in a sleeve or the folds in a skirt or in a shock of hair, but there are always more than one in every Hirschfeld drawing, and thousands search them out every week. I once wrote something about Hirschfeld for a German weekly and got several letters from German readers who count the Ninas.

Many art critics have taken Hirschfeld seriously—Adam Gopnik in this film, for instance. My favorite comment in the film, however, is by Jules Feiffer, who says that Al Hirschfeld is to drawing what Fred Astaire is to dancing. That does it. •

Art and miscegenation in New Orleans.

Degas and the "Black World"

BY CHRISTOPHER BENFEY

> ... the oft-encountered apparition of the dark sharer of his name ...
>
> —George Washington Cable, *The Grandissimes* (1880)

Despite its reputation for flamboyant misbehavior, the city of New Orleans yields its secrets grudgingly. The five-month sojourn in New Orleans of Edgar Degas—himself a notoriously secretive man—has always carried a particular fascination. The only major French painter of the Impressionist generation to travel to the United States and paint what he saw there, Degas declared his ambition to be *illustre et inconnu*, famous and unknown. And he was largely successful in this regard, much to the frustration of his biographers. Not many clues to Degas's hooded temperament have surfaced in New Orleans. Yet a major clue, unknown and unsuspected by Degas scholars, emerges from a closer look at his American relatives, the Rillieux, who were an illustrious family. It is a tale involving genius, miscegenation and Confederate luminaries.

Degas arrived in New Orleans in late October, 1872—he was 38 at the time—to visit the American wing of his far-flung family. Though he seems the quintessential Parisian painter, Degas's ties to New Orleans were manifold and longstanding. His mother, Célestine Musson Degas, was a native New Orleanian—a "Creole," according to the then current meaning of a white descendant of French and Spanish settlers of the city. Her father, Germain Musson, was an adventurer who had fled the French colony of Saint-Domingue (later Haiti) after the triumph of Toussaint L'Ouverture's revolutionary forces in 1804. He made a fortune in Louisiana cotton and married shrewdly into the prestigious Rillieux family.

Maria Rillieux Musson, Degas's maternal grandmother, died suddenly in 1819, at the age of 25. (Benjamin Latrobe, the great architect of the Capitol in Washington D.C. who was then working in New Orleans, wandered by chance into her funeral Mass at the St. Louis Cathedral. "The Church was filled with her friends," he noted, "each of whom carried a lighted taper, and the service was long & loud.") Grief-stricken, Germain took his children, including Célestine and her younger brother Michel, back to France to be educated. There Célestine married a young banker with Italian connections named Auguste Degas. They were married in 1832, when Célestine was 18. Her father's sale of a young slave girl in New Orleans (as Degas's biographer, Henri Loyrette, recently discovered) boosted Célestine's already respectable dowry. Meanwhile Célestine's brother, Michel Musson, returned to New Orleans in 1834, the year of Degas's birth, and quickly became a prominent figure in New Orleans commercial and political circles.

During the Civil War, when New Orleans was occupied by Union troops, Musson sent his wife and two of his daughters into exile in France, where they were received and entertained by their cousins in the Degas family. Impressed by the success of their American uncle, Degas's younger brothers, René and Achille, decided to try their luck in New Orleans as commission merchants during the decade after the Civil War. (War-ravaged New Orleans was no longer the land of promise that it had been during the 1840s, and even Musson's cotton business was hanging by a thread; but the Degas brothers were undaunted.) In a marriage of first cousins, René married Musson's daughter Estelle, whose first husband, a Confederate captain (and a nephew of Jefferson Davis, the president of the Confederacy), was killed in the war. Estelle and René were expecting a child in December of 1872, for which Edgar promised to serve as godfather.

On his arrival in New Orleans in 1872, Degas joined the large household—including René and his family—in Michel Musson's rented mansion on Esplanade, the main residential thoroughfare of the Creole section of the city. He split his time between the shabby-genteel neighborhoods near the old French Quarter, and the new commercial sector above Canal Street—the "American" sector—where his brothers and his uncle worked. From the start,

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Degas was torn between his enthusiasm for American society and his nostalgia for Paris. "Everything is beautiful in this world of the people," he wrote to the painter James Tissot. "But one Paris laundry girl, with bare arms, is worth it all for such a pronounced Parisian as I am."

Degas admired (and invested in) the great Southern railroads rebuilt since the war, with the "marvellous invention" of the sleeping cars, "as long as at least two carriages in France." The Creole women, whom he considered (or pretended to consider) possible marriage partners, were "almost all pretty," he informed his friend Henri Rouart, "and many have even amidst their charms that touch of ugliness without which, no salvation."

Those charms are most evident in the portraits that Degas painted of his American cousins, the three daughters of Michel Musson. "All day long I am among these dear folk," he reported, "painting and drawing, making portraits of the family." Particularly haunting are the images of his pregnant sister-in-law Estelle, who had contracted ophthalmia and was quickly going blind. In the portrait of Estelle now hanging in the National Gallery in Washington, Degas placed his cousin on the chaise longue so familiar for portraits of elegant ladies—or courtesans—in repose. But he eschewed the luxurious conventions of the genre. Pushed to one side of the composition, perched awkwardly on the chaise, Estelle stares into a reddish haze that seems to constitute her inner world. (Degas was himself having trouble with his eyes, and he had particular sympathy for his sister-in-law's plight.)

Degas's New Orleans paintings showed, perhaps inadvertently, the Creole love of luxury even as their social status was slipping: the elegant musical soirées in the living room, with René at the piano (*The Singing Lesson*, at Dumbarton Oaks, in Washington); the visit of a pedicurist, tending to a young girl's toes (in the Musée D'Orsay). What particularly fascinated Degas, however, was the large black population of New Orleans. Again and again in his letters from the city, Degas returns to the omnipresence of black people and the fact of racial mixing.

> Nothing pleases me more than the black women of all shades, holding little white children, so very white, in their arms, against white houses with columns of fluted wood and in gardens of orange trees, and ladies in muslin against the fronts of their little houses, and the steamboats with twin funnels as tall as factory smokestacks, and fruit vendors with stores filled to overflowing, and the contrast between the bustle and efficiency of offices with this vast dark animal force, etc., etc. And the pretty pure-blooded women and the pretty quadroons and the strapping black women!

Degas's contrast between efficient white offices and the black work force—he witnessed the latter along the waterfront, where the muscular "roustabouts" unloaded cotton from steamboats—has an obvious bearing on his great painting, *A Cotton Office in New Orleans* (in the Municipal Museum in Pau, in southwestern France). Degas depicted fourteen men in Musson's cotton brokerage firm, including his brothers Achille and René, his uncle Michel Musson, and his cousin by marriage, William Bell. One of the great representations of modern business life, this painting is also a family portrait, packed with private meanings.

The Musson cotton firm, a victim of Reconstruction policies and the worldwide depression of 1873, had just collapsed, as Marilyn Brown—whose documentation of Degas's sojourn in New Orleans is indispensable—recently discovered. René, holding a copy of the *Picayune* in the center of the painting, could be reading the bad news. The precarious choreography of the painting may allude to that fact. Musson himself seems to be slipping, literally, out of the lower edge of the picture. With its intense blacks and whites, the painting is like a photographic negative: the black suits represent the power of these white men, while the gleaming white cotton spread out on the table implies, as Brown notes, the labor of the invisible black work force.

Despite his fascination with blacks, Degas only painted one image of a black person among the fifteen or so paintings he began in New Orleans, the almost effaced nurse in the sketch-like *Children on a Doorstep (New Orleans)* (in the Ordrupgaard in Copenhagen). In his final letter from New Orleans, written just before his departure in early March 1873, Degas regretted not having done more with the subject of race: "The black world, I have not the time to explore it; there are some real treasures as regards drawing and color in these forests of ebony. I shall be very surprised to live among white people only in Paris. And then I love silhouettes so much and these silhouettes walk."

Courtesy Ole Woldbye, Copenhagen

EDGAR DEGAS, *CHILDREN ON A DOORSTEP (NEW ORLEANS)*, 1872

Of course there are many reasons why Degas might have neglected the "black world." His eyes were bothering him and he avoided the bright Louisiana light along the river and near the French market, where black "subjects" might be found. He suggested that such well-known painters of blacks as Biard and Manet would have done a better job in New Orleans. Still, for a master of artifice such as Degas, who spread his coat on the studio floor to simulate a beach scene, staying inside wasn't necessarily a hindrance. And as he noted, there were many black servants in the Musson house, all of them presumably available to sit for portraits. Is it possible, then, that there was some inhibition at work in Degas's reluctance to paint these black people, a submerged awareness that the "walking silhouettes" were closer to him than he wished to admit?

Degas's great-grandfather, Vincent Rillieux, fought for the Spanish king during the Louisiana phase of the American Revolution. Don Vicenze's exploits as a

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clever naval captain are granted a paragraph or so in histories of Louisiana. With a crew of fourteen Creoles, he once captured an English transport and—as his men shouted uproariously to suggest a much larger force—took prisoner the fifty-six soldiers it was carrying. He built a large house on Royal Street in 1795 (currently occupied by Brennan's Restaurant), and there he raised his daughters and two sons, one of whom, Michael, died young.

A closely guarded secret of the Rillieux family—a secret kept until now—was that Vincent Rillieux's other son, also called Vincent, had a longstanding relationship with a free woman of color called Constance Vivant. One of their sons, Norbert Rillieux, became a leading chemical engineer of his time whose inventions revolutionized the sugar industry throughout the world. Another son, Edmond, was a prominent businessman who served for a time as superintendent of the city water works. Norbert and Edmond Rillieux were first cousins of Degas's mother and of his uncle Michel Musson. While it was not unusual for Creole men of wealth to have quadroon mistresses, it is perhaps more surprising that Degas's close relation with someone as significant as Norbert Rillieux should have been overlooked for so long.

The birth record in the City Hall of New Orleans reads: "Norbert Rillieux, quadroon libre, natural son of Vincent Rillieux and Constance Vivant. Born March 17, 1806. Baptized in St. Louis Cathedral by Père Antoine." Norbert and his mother belonged to the large caste of "free people of color"—intermediate in rights and for the most part skin color between slaves and whites—that made New Orleans unlike any other city in the South. The free quadroon and octoroon women—so fascinating to New Orleans writers from George Washington Cable to Faulkner—were reputed to be of extraordinary beauty, and often met their white protectors at special "quadroon balls" arranged for that purpose. (Such terms as "quadroon" and "octoroon"—one-quarter and one-eighth African ancestry, respectively—had semi-legal status in pre-war New Orleans, but official records often blur the distinctions.)

Visiting the city in 1834, the English novelist and social critic Harriet Martineau was shocked by how widespread such practices were: "The quadroon connections in New Orleans are all but universal, as I was assured on the spot by ladies who cannot be mistaken." Sometimes the men went on to marry white women of their own class, making various provisions for their parallel families. "But many others," as Frederick Law Olmsted noted during a New Orleans visit during the 1850s, "form so strong attachments, that the arrangement is never discontinued, but becomes, indeed, that of marriage, except that it is not legalized or solemnized." Such seems to have been the case with Vincent Rillieux (who remained unmarried) and Constance Vivant.

The children of such alliances struck many observers as suffering a particularly poignant fate. Olmsted spoke of the alienation of "the class composed of the illegitimate offspring of white men and colored women (mulattos or quadroons), who, from habits of early life, the advantages of education, and the use of wealth, are too much superior to the negroes, in general, to associate with them, and are not allowed by law, or the popular prejudice, to marry white people." "The quadroon girls of New Orleans are brought up by their mothers," Martineau reported, "to be what they [i.e., the mothers] have been, the mistresses of white gentlemen. The boys are some of them sent to France."

As was Norbert Rillieux, at an early age. His father, Vincent, a wealthy engineer and inventor (and Edgar Degas's great-uncle), had designed a steam-operated press for making bales of cotton; it was so successful that it was mentioned in obituaries at the time of his more distinguished son's death. Norbert also showed an unusual aptitude for engineering, the reason perhaps why his father sent him to Paris to be educated. By 1830, at the age of 24, the precocious Norbert was an instructor in applied mechanics at the École Centrale in Paris, publishing a series of well-regarded papers on steam engines and steam power.

And then, in the early 1830s, Norbert Rillieux made an extraordinary discovery, one that transformed the sugar-refining process. Traditionally, sugarcane juice was reduced by a primitive and wasteful procedure called the "Jamaica Train," which required the tedious and back-breaking toil of many slaves, who, armed with long ladles, skimmed the boiling juice from one open, steaming kettle to the next. Various attempts had been made, with vacuum pans and horizontal coils, to harness the energy of the hot vapors rising from the boiling juice. "It remained for Rillieux," as the sugar expert George P. Meade, in a pioneering article on Rillieux first published in 1946, noted, "by a stroke of genius, to enclose the condensing coils in a vacuum chamber [which lowered

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the boiling point of the liquid] and to employ the vapor from this first condensing chamber for evaporating the juice in a second chamber under higher vacuum." Rillieux's cost-cutting innovation, comparable in its impact on the sugar industry to Eli Whitney's cotton gin, was the basis for all modern industrial evaporation.

Failing to interest the French in his invention, Rillieux found eager clients among the wealthy planters of his native Louisiana, where sugar plantations were booming during the 1830s. In 1833 he was invited back to New Orleans by the planter and banking representative Edmund Forstall to be chief engineer of a sugar refinery that Forstall was constructing in the city. But Norbert's father, Vincent, had quarreled with Edmund Forstall (records give no cause for the quarrel) and Norbert backed out of the arrangement. He was evidently on good terms with his father, who died the same year, in 1833. According to the obituary in the *New Orleans Bee*, Vincent Rillieux Jr. died of a stroke; other family records state that he died in a duel.

As Rillieux continued to perfect his apparatus, he made a fortune speculating in land, and lost it in the nationwide financial collapse of 1837. Success came in 1843 when two planters, Judah P. Benjamin and Theodore Packwood, hired Rillieux to install an evaporator on Benjamin's Bellechasse Plantation. In a competition three years later, prizes for best sugar were awarded to Benjamin and Packwood, who were cited for having used "Rillieux's patent sugar boiling apparatus."

The remarkable Judah P. Benjamin, the Jewish Confederate luminary who later served as Jefferson Davis's secretary of war ("the brains of the Confederacy," he was sometimes called), became Rillieux's major supporter in Louisiana sugar circles, defending the Rillieux apparatus in a series of widely distributed articles in De Bow's popular commercial magazine. Benjamin wrote in 1846 that the sugar made by the Rillieux method was the best in Louisiana, its "crystalline grain and snowy whiteness ... equal to those of the best double-refined sugar of our northern refineries"—already some North-South friction there. Soon the Rillieux system was also being used in Cuba and Mexico.

The irony that Benjamin, an apologist for Southern interests in Washington, became a spokesman for a technique that reduced the need for slave labor, and required skilled (and presumably non-slave) operators, was pointed out to him ten years later on the Senate floor, when Benjamin was a U.S. senator (and the first Jew in the United States Senate) for Louisiana. During a debate on slavery and Cuban annexation in 1859, Senator Dixon of Connecticut produced a copy of *De Bow's Review* and confronted Benjamin with his own admission of the inefficiency of slave labor. On the debate about slaves and sugar manufacture, Edmund Forstall also weighed in, agreeing with Benjamin that slaves could not be entrusted with the complex Rillieux apparatus. Neither planter acknowledged, as the historian John Haitmann has pointed out, the obvious irony that the inventor was himself descended from slaves.

Courtesy Mrs. John C. Wentz and Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin C. Toledano

EDGAR DEGAS IN NEW ORLEANS, 1872-73

Judah P. Benjamin's friendship with Norbert Rillieux was evidently a close one, an unconventional intimacy unencumbered by domestic arrangements. The spectacular failure of Benjamin's marriage to a Creole belle from New Orleans, who took their daughter and moved to Paris, was known to everyone in the South. Norbert Rillieux was a frequent guest at Benjamin's "bachelors' quarters" on Polymnia Street in New Orleans. Benjamin's earliest biographer reported that "frequently, for quite long visits, came the dried-up little chemist, Rillieux, always the centre of an admiring and interested group of planters from the neighborhood as he explained this or that point in the chemistry of sugar or the working of his apparatus."

This remarkable pair, the great Jewish lawyer and the brilliant free man of color, might have posed for one of Degas's famous double portraits, where the contrasts of the subjects are as important as the similarities. Each had overcome extraordinary obstacles, and a mutually beneficial symbiosis developed between them. Benjamin, born on the island of Saint Croix in the British West Indies and raised poor on the Charleston waterfront, had arrived in New Orleans with $5 in his pocket after being expelled from Yale under a cloud of suspicion. Determined to achieve the status—unheard of for a Jew—of wealthy planter and landowner (not to mention slaveowner: his plantation had 140 slaves), Benjamin used the apparatus of the free man of color to produce "snow-white" sugar, his pass into the ranks of the landed gentry. In return, the grateful Benjamin, instead of hoarding his lucrative secret, advertised Rillieux's name and genius across the slave-holding South.

For ten years at least, Rillieux was a key figure in New Orleans manufacturing, according to one contemporary "the most sought-after engineer in Louisiana." But he was still, by Louisiana law, a "person of color." We don't know how Rillieux responded to race prejudice while in America. He couldn't be lodged in the "big house" at the plantations he visited, including Benjamin's Bellechasse, and one source claims he was housed in the slave quarters. It seems more likely that his patrons provided special housing for him. The son of one of these recalled that his father placed Rillieux in a special house with slave servants when Rillieux visited as a consultant.

As an engineer, Rillieux was interested in more things than sugar. He applied himself to the problem of drainage of the lowlands, one of the perennial problems in New Orleans, and reportedly came up with a workable plan, which he presented to a group of investors headed by Laurent Millaudon. Rillieux's plan, according to Horsin-Déon, his French secretary and partner, was blocked in the state legislature by none other than Edmund Forstall, Rillieux's "sworn enemy." Charles Rousseve (in his book *The Negro in Louisiana*, which appeared in 1937) claims that the plan was a sewer system for the city—a successful sewer system was not installed until many years after the Civil War. According to Rousseve, "local authorities refused to accept" Rillieux's proposal because "sentiment against free people of color had become

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sufficiently acute to prohibit the bestowing of such an honor upon a member of this group."

We don't know exactly when Rillieux returned to France. He had many reasons, including the new restrictions imposed in 1855 on free people of color in New Orleans. Men like Rillieux were not allowed to move about the streets without permission, nor could they visit the city without first presenting the guarantee of a white sponsor. There was also a steep decline in the sugar industry during the Civil War. Horsin-Déon says that Rillieux left America "after the war, exhausted and asking for nothing but rest," but other sources refer to his presence in Paris as early as 1861.

Back in Paris, Rillieux became passionately interested in Egypt, perhaps after constructing a sugar refinery there. Duncan Kenner, a Louisiana sugar planter and noted horse breeder—famous for his secret mission late in the Civil War, when he proposed, in Jefferson Davis's name, an exchange of emancipation of Southern slaves for European recognition of the Confederacy—visited Rillieux in 1880 and was surprised to find the old man deciphering hieroglyphics at the Bibliothèque Nationale. When Rillieux was nearly 75, he "returned from the pyramids," as one French commentator remarked, and made further refinements in various devices for the production of cane and beet sugar.

Rillieux was often described as a "*caractère difficile*," a gruff and plainspoken man who did not suffer fools gladly. A colleague in Paris mentioned Rillieux's criticisms of his rivals as "formulated with a vivacity quite in character with the irritable inventor." A fine photograph taken in Paris during Rillieux's later years shows an imposing, light-skinned figure with forceful hands and intense features. He is dressed formally in a frock-coat and wears a full white beard.

Norbert Rillieux died when he was 89, and was buried in the great cemetery of Père Lachaise, with the inscription, *Ici reposent Norbert Rillieux ingénieur civil à la Nouvelle Orleans 18 Mars 1806/ décédé à Paris le 8 Octobre 1894/ Emily Cuckow, Veuve Rillieux 1827-1912.* Of his widow nothing is known.

Did Edgar Degas know of his mother's first cousin Norbert Rillieux? It hardly seems likely that he did not. Even if we assume that the Musson-Degas family did not speak openly of Norbert Rillieux, out of embarrassment at miscegenation so close to home, the network of New Orleans families with French connections was so profoundly interrelated that it is reasonable to assume that the name would have been mentioned among them. Two of Rillieux's major patrons, Judah Benjamin and Duncan Kenner, were well known to the Musson family. (Kenner had visited the Musson family in Paris when Célestine Musson Degas was pregnant with her first child, Edgar, and gone riding with Degas's uncle Henri Degas in Naples.) And Vincent Jr., Norbert's father, was hardly shunned. As late as 1873, the year Degas visited New Orleans, the prominent architect James Freret, whose grandmother was a Rillieux (a sister of Vincent Jr.), proudly proclaimed his kinship with Norbert's father, the designer of the innovative cotton press. And Norbert Rillieux was among the most famous New Orleanians in nineteenth-century France. Degas himself was fascinated by new inventions and industrial apparatus, and he socialized with such industrialists and entrepreneurs as his friend Henri Rouart. The Rillieux name would have been a familiar one in such circles. Indeed, if we assume that Degas was aware of Norbert Rillieux's achievements, the place to look for his ties to Norbert is perhaps not in his rare paintings of black subjects, but rather in the cousins' shared fascination with technology.

While in New Orleans, Degas wrote to Rouart about a new steam-powered streetcar designed by Emile Lamm, hired by the developer Laurent Millaudon. Millaudon was a friend of the Musson family and a patron, thirty years earlier, of Norbert Rillieux. "I shall bring you a description of this contraption," Degas promised Rouart. Not only did Degas stay abreast of the latest technological innovations, he was himself a technical innovator of genius, in his brilliant and much-noted use of peculiar points of view (as in the Cotton Office painting), unexpected croppings and off-center compositions, and in his improvisatory approach to the artist's materials: mixing paint with various thinners, experimenting with printing techniques, and so on. As Theodore Reff has noted, "there was in [Degas] something of the amateur scientist and inventor." It is this aspect of Degas, the restless and irritable experimenter with new techniques and subjects, which most resembles Rillieux.

Another context for the Rillieux name to be spoken in the Degas-Musson family arises from the fraught political scene in post-war New Orleans. Degas arrived just in time to witness the corrupt and contested state election of 1872, and stayed long enough for the first of several coup attempts that followed. The bitterness arising from the election—which placed an African American interim governor, P.B.S. Pinchback, briefly in office—lasted for several years, culminating in the bloody confrontation of 1874 known as the "Battle of Liberty Place," when members of a white supremacist militia called the Crescent City White League fought with the integrated Metropolitan Police. Thirty people died, before federal troops called in by President Grant restored order.

The Musson family was deeply enmeshed in the very highest reaches of New Orleans politics. During the spring and summer of 1873, just after his nephew Edgar Degas's departure, Michel Musson was a leader in the "Unification Movement," an attempt to bring about cooperation between white and black businessmen (and, not so incidentally, to put an end to Reconstruction business practices thought to be unfair to whites). The movement was spearheaded by a "Committee of One Hundred," made up of fifty prominent whites (including Musson) and fifty blacks. The blacks were mostly former free men of color who also felt dispossessed by the Republican partnership of former slaves and white carpetbaggers, and among them was Edmond Rillieux, Norbert's younger brother. For Musson there must have been something uneasily literal about the idea of "Unification" as he looked across the room at his cousin and plotted the joining of their business interests.

When Unification failed to catch hold in the rest of Louisiana, many of its participants, including Musson, looked to more radical measures to "redeem" the state. It was Musson, as Marilyn Brown discovered, who presided over the White League's planning meeting, just before the Liberty Place battle, while his son-in-law William Bell (another inhabitant of the Esplanade house) served as treasurer for the White League. Bell's friend and business partner, General Fred N. Ogden, was the military commander of the White League militia.

These matters go unmentioned in Edgar Degas's letters, and yet he could hardly have been unaware of them. His was a family in which issues of race were part of the daily texture of life. With illustrious black cousins, in Paris and Louisiana, he could not have painted black faces in New Orleans as mere local scenery, aspects of an exotic landscape quite foreign to himself. Nor could he entirely anesthetize blacks, as "real treasures as regards drawing and color." One is tempted to interpret the effaced black nurse in *Children on a Doorstep* as symbolic of his own hesitations about the depiction of race.

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That hesitation is given brilliant expression six years later in his painting of a circus performer. The novelist and critic Edmond de Goncourt had visited Degas in his studio in 1874, a year after Degas's return from New Orleans, and found him "an original fellow ... sickly, neurotic, and so ophthalmic that he is afraid of losing his sight." "Among all the artists I have met so far," Goncourt noted in his famous journal, "he is the one who has best been able, in representing modern life, to catch the spirit of that life." The painter and the critic remained in touch, and five years later Degas invited Goncourt back to his studio. "I will have my negress there," he promised. The woman in question was the famous mulatto circus performer Miss La La, acrobat of the Cirque Fernando whom Degas painted towards the beginning of 1879. (The picture is in the National Gallery in London.) He depicted Miss La La being hoisted into the air by a rope held between her teeth. Part triumphant ascension, part violent wrenching (or lynching), her abrupt and precarious upward journey, viewed from below, possesses an unnerving ambivalence—a fitting response, perhaps, to one more ambiguity of "modern life."

What is beyond dispute is that from the descendants of Don Vicenze Rillieux, the resourceful sea captain, came a remarkable number of innovative minds, including his son Vincent Jr., inventor of a better cotton press, his grandson Norbert, a much greater inventor on several fronts, and his great grandson Edgar Degas, one of the supreme inventors of modern painting. The American wing of Degas's family, especially the Rillieux branch, was far more interesting than has been thought, and was as significant historically as the motley crew of European nobility—the Bellellis, the Morbillis and the rest—that has received the most attention from Degas's biographers. "Louisiana must be respected by all her children," Degas wrote Henri Rouart in December, 1872, "and I am almost one of them."

CHRISTOPHER BENFEY, who teaches at Mount Holyoke College, is completing a book about Degas in New Orleans.

What liberals don't like to say.

The Lost Children

BY JEAN BETHKE ELSHTAIN

I was a teenage mother—married, but a teenage mother just the same. I frequently encounter people who find this hard to believe. I am a university professor, and teenage motherhood doesn't belong in the orderly and secure world of higher education and its environs. The doubters are not entirely wrong, not even about the era I hail from, when unliberated young men and women "did the right thing" by combining marriage and sex. A good number of these marriages, after all, did not work out, though a remarkable number of them did.

According to Kristin Luker, I was a part of the real epidemic of teenage motherhood in modern American history. The real epidemic of teenage motherhood, you see, is the one that occurred when Dwight Eisenhower was in the White House, before the 1960s burst upon us all. In the 1950s, pregnancy was all the rage. The fact that it was preceded or accompanied by marriage seems a matter of little moment to Luker. Married teen mothers and unmarried teen mothers: for her, it is a distinction without a momentous difference. Luker does observe that society didn't run around having fits about teenage pregnancy in those days, because the kids were wed; but it is, in her view, a matter of diminished import. Today's "babies having babies" "are simply doing what such 'babies' did in the 1940s and 1950s, although they are more visible now than their counterparts were then." What troubles Luker is that today society is hysterical about the question, with Democrats and Republicans alike taking aim at the mothers in their teens. Teenage mothers are today's "scapegoats," wrongly and harshly accused of "selfishness." And there is also misogyny in the alarm about teenage pregnancy: since the subjects are women, "their lapses from 'good' behavior are seen as enormously threatening."

Dubious Conceptions:
The Politics of Teenage Pregnancy
by Kristin Luker
(Harvard University Press, 283 pp., $24.95)

Never mind that the teenage pregnancy of our day is linked to extraordinary rates of illegitimacy; to high-school dropout rates that are unacceptably high; to dismal or difficult living conditions; to drug and alcohol abuse; and, of course, to more teenage childbearing. We know that the babies of teenage mothers are less likely to flourish than are babies born under more favorable circumstances. They tend to be low birth-weight babies and are less likely to have had adequate prenatal care. All too often, abuse and neglect are malevolent companions on their harsh journey, certainly by comparison to the prospects faced by children born into stable, two-parent situations—the safest environment for children, considering the alternatives. This is the terrible picture that is warranted by the best available evidence. Yet Luker downplays the bleakness of this scenario. And there is a rather important figure in the growing drama of teenage motherhood that almost disappears in her discussion. It is that shadowy entity known as "the baby." In this book of 283 pages, there are approximately five pages devoted to the babies of unwed teen mothers. Luker acknowledges that the children of teenage mothers are more likely to have health problems, cognitive impairment and behavioral troubles. "Some studies suggest they may be more likely to be abused and neglected by their mothers"; and more children of teenage moms drop out of school or are "involved" with criminality. And yet she concludes that "the jury is still out on whether teenage parents make bad parents," shifting the entire discussion to the subject of parents.

On the subject of unwed mothers, however, the jury is definitely not out on the unhappy outcomes. Luker's analysis diverges significantly from the findings of a comprehensive report called

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A Message from Negative Population Growth, Inc.

Why Does Our Government Allow Over One Million New Immigrants to Come Here Every Year?

. . . When a Majority of Americans Say We Should Not Admit More Than 100,000 a Year at Most!!

A Roper poll, sponsored by NPG, Inc. and released in February, showed that a majority of Americans (54%) want immigration cut to not more than 100,000 a year. So why does our Federal Government allow more than **ten times that many** to come here every year?

The poll showed that 70% of Americans – **that's over two out of three** – want immigration cut drastically to not over 300,000 a year. How in the world can our government possibly justify an immigration policy that allows **four times that many** to come here every year? Don't our elected representatives have an obligation to heed the clearly expressed wishes of the American public?

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We urge Congress, with the vigorous support of President Clinton, to enact legislation that would drastically reduce the present level of immigration, and thus bring our immigration policy into line with the clearly expressed wishes of the overwhelming majority of the American people.

Illegal Immigration - Out of Control

Polls have shown for years that, almost unanimously, Americans want illegal immigration stopped. Despite that, our Federal Government has done very little to reduce illegal immigration, much less stop it. An estimated 350,000 illegal aliens settle here permanently each year. **That is over three times more than the 100,000 a year a majority of Americans favor for total immigration.** These illegal settlers join a pool of an estimated **five to six million** illegal aliens who are already living here permanently in violation of our laws.

The Roper poll cited above showed that 74% of Americans (three out of every four) want illegal aliens identified and deported. So why is our government not doing just that? In 1994 only about 40,000 illegal aliens were deported. A vastly increased program of deportations would not only deter prospective illegal migrants abroad, but also motivate those already here to leave voluntarily.

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NPG urges a drastic reduction in immigration solely because of its contribution to the disastrous growth of our U.S. population. We are on the path from our present population of 265 million to a population of nearly 500 million by 2100. **More than 90% of that growth will be the direct result of post-2000 immigration.**

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Isn't there someone among our political leaders who is willing to recognize the need for a smaller U.S.population and for public policies to achieve it? He or she would have the support of a majority of Americans. The Roper poll cited above showed that 54% of Americans believe that our country is already overpopulated.

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Kids Having Kids that was issued earlier this year by the Robin Hood Foundation, a New York-based anti-poverty charity and certainly no stalking horse for heartless right-wingers. From this study we learn that adolescent childbearing is a factor that lowers the likelihood of completing high school by 50 percent, that it increases the likelihood of more children by 24 percent, that it increases the time spent as a single parent during the first thirteen years of parenthood by 57 percent. Luker prefers to downplay the deleterious effects of teenage childbearing. She rests much of her argument on widely popularized studies done in the early 1990s that have not held up very well under stringent empirical examination—on studies that claim, for example, that early childbearing is a positive reaction to adverse circumstances that may even promote success for young women.

Indeed, Luker inclines toward the view that early childbearing should be viewed as a positive adaptation to adverse circumstances. I don't doubt that having a child when you are a teenager is some sort of a response to circumstances. But to put a positive spin on what is, for the human beings involved, a torn and broken situation, and all too often a disaster, seems shortsighted and callous. It isn't just the lives of the young mothers, moreover, that must concern the responsible student of this subject. Children born under these circumstances face limited—and in many instances tragic—destinies.

The Robin Hood Foundation report shows that the costs of adolescent parenting are borne by the young parents, the children and the society; but the heaviest price of all, in poor health, deteriorated home environments, lower cognitive development, worse educational outcomes, higher rates of behavior problems of all kinds and higher rates of adolescent childbearing themselves, are surely borne by the children. One wonders how it could be otherwise. It requires an heroic effort to raise a child against such odds. The vast majority of girls, unsurprisingly, are not up to it. It is difficult to expect heroism from an unmarried 15-year-old kid in a lousy situation, and it is cruel to demand it.

The home environments of children born to unwed teenage mothers yield double the rate of reported abuse for out-of-wedlock children in general. By the time these kids get to school, they are 40 percent more likely to drop out. Fathers bear relatively few of the costs of adolescent childbearing, for a variety of reasons; some fathers are unknown to their children, and some fathers are unknown even to the child's mother, if she is sexually active with multiple partners. The disappearance of decent jobs for unskilled workers sufficient to support a family is also a factor. (This is a factor that Luker does emphasize; but she likes economic explanations.) The majority of women on welfare began their childbearing in their teens. Luker acknowledges that they are more likely to come from single-parent families or from homes broken by divorce or separation: patterns repeat themselves. A surprisingly high proportion of incarcerated men were themselves born to teenage mothers—over 70 percent, according to Sarah S. Brown, the director of the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. The direct cost to taxpayers of teenage childbearing is about $7 billion annually. The estimated overall social cost (and it is a moderate estimate) is some $21 billion annually.

The United States has the highest rate of unwed teenage childbearing in the industrial world. Over 1 million adolescent girls become pregnant in America every year, and half of these girls give birth. Yet we seem to alternate between extreme responses of two kinds. There is the lock 'em up, make 'em stop, and make 'em pay school; and there is the view that one doesn't dare criticize teen pregnancy unless one wishes to expose oneself as a moralistic reactionary creep who hates sex (and anyway the situation wouldn't be so bad if we would just lighten up).

In public discussions in our highly charged political atmosphere, this Panglossianism works like this. Somebody stirringly recounts the lives of an unwed mother and a child who, all adversity notwithstanding, are doing well or have done well, thank you. They become a poster couple for the cause, the cause being societal support for any choices that people make so long as these are their own choices. If you argue otherwise, if you insist that this is a terribly misplaced notion of individual autonomy, you are called intolerant and wedded to outmoded ideas. If you retort that social analysts must look at the larger picture, that individual success stories don't change the larger picture, you are still taken for a mean-spirited sort. You just aren't pulsating with the appropriate sentimentality. Unlike, say, Toni Morrison, who, in an unforgettable interview with *Time* magazine in 1989, opined that babies may be "time consuming. But who cares about the schedule? What is this business that you have to finish school at 18? ... The body is ready to have babies, that's why they are in a passion to do it. Nature wants it done then...." As for the futures of these young women—no problem. "They can become brain surgeons. We have to help them become brain surgeons. That's my job.... And when you want to be a brain surgeon, call me—I will take care of your baby." The magazine inexplicably failed to give Morrison's 1-800 number.

What is Luker's contribution to this debate? Rather less than one might hope, coming from the author of a fine work on *Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood.* In this new book, Luker seems incapable of analytical lucidity and clear conviction. She is torn between "hard" social science and a more interpretive method; between the desire to support the "rational choices" that young, unmarried women make when they get pregnant and keep their babies, and the recognition that this situation is fraught with dangers and troubles; between the notion that this society has a stake in upholding certain norms of social behavior and the notion that this society should be far more tolerant in entertaining behaviors of all kinds; between articulating desirable limits to sexual activity and embracing what she enthusiastically describes as the "world of sexual freedom that opened in the 1970s," in which case the mere fact that so many teenagers have sex becomes itself an argument for teenagers having sex. Whatever is, is normative.

Daniel Patrick Moynihan calls this "defining deviancy down," and Luker is a state-of-the-art example of the phenomenon that he has in mind. Illegitimacy in America is losing its stigma. It still causes discomfort in some quarters, but it is no longer universally a matter of ethical import. Or, as Luker writes, rather breathlessly, "in less than a decade a shameful condition was transformed into a personal choice." What follows from this transformation are "innovative family structures," that is, single mothers and children whose lives are characterized by a series of relationships with non-committed partners—with partners who are scarcely partners at all.

Luker takes it as a given that sex is "permanently disconnected from marriage." It is this fact, she avers, that has spawned our great (and unjustified) social anxiety, that has turned teenagers into scapegoats because they are "participating in the new world of sexual freedom and because most adults are (often rightly) doubtful about the skills and resources these young people possess." Consider that phrase: "the new world of sexual freedom." This makes it sound like some final frontier, like a brave new zone of unfettered adventure, in con-

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trast to the stifling world of old. And that phrase "often rightly doubtful" doesn't qualify very much; it is tepid and it is in parentheses.

No, Luker does not intend to represent teenage motherhood as an ideal, or as a golden possibility. But her book is, at the very least, of two minds. The excerpts from interviews with teenage mothers with which she laces her text are genuinely unsettling. They show these kids to be "confused, misinformed, adrift," as they tell tales of coerced sexual encounters: "doing it" because everybody else was and they were getting teased; having sex because they couldn't think of a reason not to; and still finding it unappealing, not "liking it." Why, then, does the same book open with an idyll? It is set in a "sunny playroom for toddlers." A male infant is entranced "in front of a colorful bead-and-wire toy." His fingers are "chubby." The wires are "bright." A preemie, he is now flourishing after a "rocky start." Across the street, in the high school to which the daycare center is attached, the little boy's mother is taking an algebra exam. She wants to be the first member of her family to graduate from high school, and when she does she "has every intention of crossing that auditorium stage three months from now, dressed in her graduation robes and holding baby David in her arms."

This sunniness is, by Luker's own admission, anomalous. Teenage mothers are less likely to finish school than are other teens, and most of them do not go on to college, and their babies are less likely to flourish. Why, then, begin with this cheerful scene? Luker would respond that she wants to give the problem a "human face." Well and good. But it would be more tough-minded and honest—and it would still give the problem a human face—to introduce her study of this fraught subject with a grittier and more accurate representation. Instead we get a bit of urban pastoral, with Michelle (Luker's name for the teen mom) cast as nothing less than a "pioneer." Why? The reason is that, until the mid-1970s, visibly pregnant women were banned from school grounds, lest swelling bellies corrupt the minds of youth.

A pioneer! It is a very odd choice of word. A pioneer is one who prepares the way for others to follow. Is this the territory into which we want more young women to be led? I do not deny that there was a good bit of nonsense about pregnancy in the old days. I recall that my English teacher in the Cache La Poudre High School in northern Colorado was compelled by school board regulations to leave her job in the middle of the school year when she reached the fourth month of pregnancy and was starting to "show." She was married, of course, but school policy forbade the display of pregnancy to youth. To the same youth, that is, who were sneaking out to see *Rock Around the Clock*, listening to Elvis and mourning the death of Buddy Holly, and figuring out "how far to go" in parked cars on Saturday night. We were not quite as innocent or quite as shockable as the school board presumed. But sending a married, adult English teacher out of the classroom and into decorous invisibility is not the same thing as exulting in the "pioneer" achievements of unmarried, pregnant high-school girls.

Something is wrong with this picture. For Luker, what is wrong is that conservatives think that Michelle is compromising David's future because she is "selfish." Liberals, who are by definition kinder, view Michelle as doing harm unwittingly, because she is a victim. She is "too immature to appreciate the implications of her actions." Luker rejects this view because it denies Michelle "full personhood, exempting her from the obligations of being a moral actor held accountable for the choices she makes." But Luker doesn't consistently uphold accountability, either. To assess responsibility, in her universe, is to blame; and blaming is bad. So we are left with moral actors who are exempt from a standard of moral accountability. This is incoherent.

When she feels pressed, Luker retreats behind a defensive perimeter defined by a rigid social science methodology. We just don't know enough, she says, to make any solid judgments. Thus, we must forbear arguing against early childbearing on "health grounds," because the data are not "unambiguous." Although "at first glance" much of the evidence of the deleterious effects of teenage childbearing seems "compelling," strict relations of "cause and effect" are murky, and so agnosticism is advisable. This mantra—"until we have more sophisticated data"—is repeated again and again. It appears, then, that no political decisions can ever be made, since perfect knowledge will never exist in the real world.

The confident interpreter of human intention has suddenly transmogrified into the cautious positivist who teaches that you cannot approve or disapprove of anything in social life unless you can demonstrate beyond dispute an instance of direct linear causation: first x, then y. Does early childbearing cause high-school dropouts? Certainly the two phenomena are strongly correlated. But cause and effect? Sure, there is a sub-

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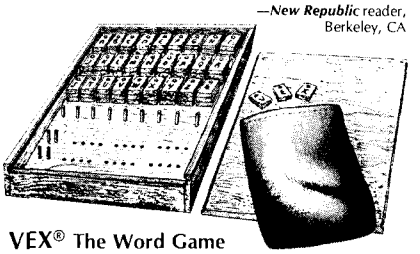

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stantial difference between the "level of education attained by those women who give birth while in junior high or high school and the level attained by those who do not." Yet "is this difference meaningful? Does having a baby truly change a teenager's life in significant ways?" Maybe, maybe not.

The maybe not finally wins out, though. Those who become pregnant as teens "differ from other women even before they conceive." Luker returns to this theme again and again. Her discussion goes like this: some pretty dismal data are displayed. The misguided use of those data by conservatives, and sometimes by liberals, is remarked upon. The unacceptably narrow approaches of those who stress "rational choice" too strongly and those who stress "victimization" too strongly are lamented. And we are delivered to Luker's favorite conclusion, which is that we are not so sure that the data hold up if what we're looking for is linear causation. We had better withhold judgment and stay our hand in considering the outcomes generated by early childbearing. The data are just too ambiguous about the risks involved.

The ambiguity of the data, according to Luker, is owed to the fact that teenagers who become pregnant are "discouraged" to begin with. If you presume this discouragement as a preexisting factor, then the negative effects which appear to "flow from early sexual experiences and pregnancy" will likely diminish. These young women were going to have rough lives anyway. This is a very strange argument; it suggests that it is fine for a teenager to give birth at age 15 if she is affluent and has a robust support network. It is an argument upon which Luker rightly heaps scorn at one point in her book. And yet she generalizes from it to what she considers the only decent response to teenage pregnancy: if all teen moms had lots of support, especially economic support, we could stop worrying and stop scapegoating young unmarried women.

So what matters urgently for Luker? Despite her swipes at liberal assumptions, she opts for the usual big-ticket items. If a comprehensive system of health care existed in America, the medical risks to the mother associated with early pregnancy would disappear. For the important point, you see, is that early sexuality and childbearing untethered to marriage and stable families is a fact of modern life. The sooner we get real and acknowledge that fact, the better. Then we can move with all deliberate speed to eliminate poverty, to build better schools and neighborhoods, to create decent jobs for teenage fathers. We also need more and better contraception and abortion, including over-the-counter pills without prescriptions and no questions asked. We need to extend the hours of birth control and abortion clinics. We need highly subsidized daycare as part of the public schools ("as in France").

If we achieve all of this, young women and men, "even if they did have babies and even if they did have them out of wedlock," could afford to raise them. And, if we fail to achieve this gold-plated system of total care, American society "could conceivably become so punitive and coercive that poor teenagers would be discouraged from ever having babies...." Note that the discouragement of teenagers from having babies is here construed as an *un*desirable outcome. At this point China is adduced by Luker as a society that "discourages" births that the state doesn't want. This is overkill by understatement. China's policy is not a policy of "discouragement"; it is a policy of brutal control of its own population.

Luker folds teenage childbearing into the issue of poverty in order to deny that teenage pregnancy and teenage childbirth correlate "with poverty in any simple way." She puts just about all her eggs into the poverty basket. Her conclusion is that early childbearing doesn't make young women poor. Instead, "poverty makes women bear children at an early age." But why, one wonders, must we choose between the one and the other? Doesn't it make more sense to look at the ways in which early childbearing deepens and exacerbates other problems? Doesn't it make more sense to discourage out-of-wedlock births because they are a strong contributing factor to diminishing the well-being of the mother and the child?

Having championed "personal choice," Luker now champions economic determinism. By the end of her book, the moral agency that she wished to restore to the lives of teen moms has pretty much disappeared. Young women are no longer ethical beings. They are flotsam and jetsam on the roiling seas of economic distress. It is poverty that makes them do what they do. Never mind that this is precisely the sort of strong assertion of causality against which Luker has cautioned us. Like many good liberals who are faced with these unpleasant realities, Luker is at sixes and sevens. She knows that it is a problem that too many babies are born to too many unmarried mothers who are too young. But she cannot bring herself to judge the problem morally. Judgment is blame and blame is bad. So we are invited to put our capacity for ethical discrimination on hold.

Luker leaves us nowhere. Her categories of interpretation commit her tacitly to the idea that, if young unmarried Michelle is a pioneer, then we need to encourage her choices. And we can do that only if, as a society, we are willing to pay. And then the problem would no longer be a problem: with poverty diminished and full-service publicly funded daycare available from infancy, with birth control and abortion clinics dotting the landscape, with parents prevented from restricting the choices of their teens, more teenagers would "choose" not to have babies. One way or the other, as a consequence of these vast social reforms, teenage motherhood would no longer be high on our list of social anxieties. We could relax.

For the sake of argument, let's take Luker at her word and agree that having a baby for many young women is a "pledge of hope," the action of a rational being making the best of a bad situation. If we are "rightly concerned about how difficult and costly it is to help children like David"—the little boy in this book's urban pastoral—then how should we think about Michelle, his mother? Luker is right to remind us that the problem isn't faced exclusively by African American women, who comprise about 15 percent of the population of teenage girls but account for more than a third of teenage mothers. (Nine out of ten African American teens who give birth do so out of wedlock.) She is also right to criticize those who assume that the soaring rates of teenage births can be attributed to ignorance and lack of information. As Luker cogently points out, teenagers certainly know where babies come from.

Luker then moves to represent the world of the contemporary teenager as a universe so different from the universe of their parents that an incommensurable gulf exists between the generations. And here we come to the social constructionism that shapes Luker's approach at this juncture and leads her to conclude that all current policy options, Republican or Democratic, must fail, since they misdescribe the fundamental problem. And what is the fundamental problem? It is the construction of female sexuality in American history. This will explain why Americans now "believe that teenagers" are "becoming pregnant in record numbers." (But that, too, is an evasion. The prevalent concern is with the growing rate of out-of-wedlock births, with all their attendant difficulties.)

What, then, accounts for where we

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are? There were those crabby Puritans, so the problem has deep roots in our history. It used to be the case that people were compelled to get married if the union was about to bear fruit. If things weren't made right, the result was pariah status, especially for the woman. And that was wrong, because it was morally censorious. Women reformers in the nineteenth century changed the way we think about women in trouble by redefining such women as victims of circumstances and runaway male lust, rather than as miscreants. "Women reformers, mobilizing for the first time *as women*," Luker writes, "engineered a new way of talking and thinking about 'women in trouble.' Whether prostitutes, abandoned mistresses, or unmarried mothers, such 'unfortunates' were now defined as victims of social and economic circumstance rather than as moral pariahs."

The child-saving movement followed, and with it a concern for "fair play for nameless little ones and a changed view of bastardy." The child-savers sought to rescue children from bad situations by refusing to stigmatize the children with the circumstances of their birth. In the twentieth century, social maladjustment emerged as the goad to precocious sexuality, as child advocates and reformers moved in on the scene yet again by demanding (and, in most cases, getting) compulsory schooling laws; protective labor legislation; the creation of juvenile courts; birth control; and curtailment on the right to marry for "undesirables" such as "lunatics, idiots, imbeciles and the feebleminded," a low point in the reformist story. Reform didn't mean control went away; it got redirected.

Luker's quick run through the history of our "construction" of female sexuality and childbearing has some interesting moments, but it comes to an abrupt halt with her chastisement of the reformers of the 1970s for their assumption that children born to unwed parents are destined for "a limited and dreary fate." And yet, again undercutting herself, she says that "there is considerable truth in this assumption." What, then, do we choose to hear?

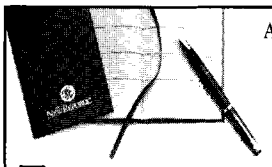
We know, writes Luker, that "children born to unwed parents are more likely to grow up in a single-parent home than are children whose parents are married." And "social-science research confirms what most people intuit, [namely, that] children who grow up with a single parent have, on average, fewer of every kind of resource than do children who grow up in two-parent families.... Consequently, when we look at the children of unwed parents, we are looking at children who risk having only one parent's love, attention and income to draw on, and also at children who, because they come from poor families, face independent risks of hardship, whatever their parents' marital status." All of this, surely, is reason enough to fret. But then Luker takes much of this back. The "legal status" of the parents' relationship is a moot point. Teenage childbearing is a "symptom, not a cause."

Her own data, however, suggest that it is both. Why, then, ignore one side of the ledger? The reason, I think, is to avoid having to criticize some of the "choices" that these young women make. This, again, would be perilously close to blaming. And so throughout the book Luker veers away from the grim implications of her own research. She wants to be an entirely up-to-date person, and it just "isn't realistic to ask today's teens to abstain from sex for a decade or two...." But I haven't heard anybody calling for abstinence for a decade or two. Of course, if the alternatives are sexual freedom or decades of abstinence, then sexual freedom wins the day. And then more and better birth control—the whole panoply of reforms noted above—kicks in, or would kick in if we were adequately enlightened. But we are not adequately enlightened. In recent years "both liberals and conservatives"—harshly and mistakenly, in Luker's view—have ascribed the poverty of single mothers and their babies "to the sexual and reproductive decisions that poor women make."

But hold on a minute. We are not talking about *women*. We are talking about *girls*. The unwed mothers under discussion are kids. Are they making decisions in any meaningful sense? Are they weighing risks, analyzing feelings, applying concepts, drawing on experience? It is a fact that fully 80 percent to 90 percent of teen pregnancies are accidents, "unplanned," and emphatically not the result of a "reproductive decision." Generally they are the consequences of a dicey, thoughtless, immature game of hit or miss.

There is something dubious about Luker's recourse to the prestige of moral reasoning in her portrait of these young mothers. About whether or not to have sex, certainly, the status of moral agency, of "choice," for teenagers is murky indeed. Luker's own respondents seem to fall into sexual activity out of conformist pressure or out of curiosity. It is odd how few of them mention desire. When Luker wants to criticize the critics, she casts these girls as decision-makers. When she wants to goad us into more support for pregnant teenagers, she chides researchers who "assume that people perceive clear choices and [feel] empowered to act on them." It is hard to reconcile these two claims.

The decision of these young mothers to "keep the baby" appears, in Luker's account, as something akin to a badge of honor, a symbol of status, even if the grandmother is actually raising the child. Luker notes that most teenage mothers who carry to term refuse to give up their babies for adoption. This, she says, is a shift from an earlier era—but then "unwed mothers are pioneers on a frontier where increasing numbers of Americans are now settling." Luker's notion of adoption is amazing. She explains that girls who refuse to consider adoption for their babies are preferring their babies to "better material [lives]". They are choosing children over money. For adoption is apparently an expression of materialism. Adoption "means placing more value on cold hard cash than on a young woman's capacity to love." And so these resolute young mothers, on Luker's account, are the beneficiaries of a feminist struggle that yielded "hard-won control ... over fertility"—control that is now "being imperiled," with the consequence that "all women are having more trouble achieving their fertility preferences." The "fertility pref-



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erence" of tens of thousands of teenagers is to act on their fertility by getting pregnant and keeping their babies because they love them. This makes unwed mothers the true exemplars of "family values." They are, indeed, a new breed of idealists.

"Achieving their fertility preferences"? "Cold hard cash"? Adoption, in this way of thinking, is not the gift of a loving and stable home to a child. It is something akin to baby-selling. I know many families who have adopted children. I have two adopted nieces and one adopted nephew. They were adopted because members of my big extended family offered homes and stability and possibility and a love that endures—a tough-minded commitment to kids who were otherwise destined to rounds of foster care and, in one instance, to pariahdom. Why is Luker so keen to stigmatize adoption, when she is so keen not to stigmatize other practices that, as she herself concludes, contribute to a shopping list of risks for the children of bewildered, disoriented, frustrated, teenage mothers? And in truth the situation is even more dire. Naïve and disoriented mothers sometimes pull it together. Crack-addicted or alcohol-addicted or cognitively limited mothers rarely do. The record is clear. Resourceful, capable teenage mothers are conspicuous by their rarity.

There is a passage in Luker's book that gives the game away, though she doesn't see it. She observes that in the days when premarital sex was considered wrong, "young men and women typically negotiated the meaning of each step (the first kiss, the first caress, 'petting') and where it fit into the relationship; the woman permitted increasing sexual intimacy in return for greater commitment from the man. Young women today have no such clear-cut rules." Isn't this another way of saying that young women today, those "pioneers" on the frontier of the new freedom, are less powerful, rather than more powerful, in their sexual encounters?

The process of negotiation has broken down. The glories of the sexual revolution notwithstanding, teenage girls have lost their influence on intimacy. The difficulty is not that boys will be boys. The difficulty is that teenagers will be teenagers and human bodies will be human bodies. The girls still face pregnancy. The boys no longer face "doing the right thing." And both are lost in this wasteland that was advertised as a garden of delights.

Still, we cannot turn back the clock. And so the fate of the babies of young unmarried mothers is a question that we are here given leave to evade. And the fate of our ideas of trust and commitment is a question that we don't have to press. And the implications of a moral and cultural defection from the view that sex, marriage, childbearing and the institutions of the family have some connection to one another are moot. We are left contemplating the empirical realities of thoughtless teenage sex, and tens of thousands of babies being born, and tens of thousands of teenage mothers barely coping and frequently collapsing, and tens of thousands of fathers lost to their children. That is just the way we do things around here. •

After the Deluge, and Before

BY ROBERT KAGAN

Dreams of the Heart: The Autobiography of President Violeta Barrios de Chamorro of Nicaragua by Violeta Barrios de Chamorro with Sonia Cruz de Baltodano and Guido Fernández

(Simon & Schuster, 352 pp., $25)

When Violeta Chamorro hands over her presidential sash to the winner of this month's elections she can be confident of an exalted place in Nicaragua's extraordinary history. As the victor in a free election who transferred power peacefully to an opposition party after a second free election, she will have done what has never been done before in Nicaragua's 170 years as an independent nation (though several times the presidency has passed between different factions of the same party). For this alone, Chamorro will have earned a place in the company of the great Latin American leaders of the past two centuries.

Unfortunately, there is cause to wonder whether such a peaceful and legal transfer of power will occur again. *Continuismo*, after all, is an old and sturdy tradition in Nicaragua. Anastasio Somoza García and his sons kept themselves in power for more than four decades; the Sandinistas, whom Chamorro defeated in 1990, managed to hang on to power for only ten years, but they had plans to rule for many more before they made the mistake of holding a fair election. Earlier in the century, a Liberal Party dynasty under General José Santos Zelaya gave way, after American intervention, to a Conservative Party dynasty led much of the time by Violeta Chamorro's husband's great-uncle, Emiliano Chamorro.

Even this month's election, a historic event in the political culture of the country, offers no security against a return to old habits. For one thing, the United States, which has been, since 1990, the most important outside guarantor of the democratic rules of the game, is less and less willing to provide even the tiny amount of attention that is required to keep Nicaragua from jumping the tracks again. Combing through three years of speeches by President Clinton and the Clinton administration, one finds nary a mention of Nicaragua. When Chamorro turns over power, however, the need for outside scrutiny will actually increase. For the two candidates who stand the best chance of succeeding her are stronger and more politically adept—and so, in a fine Nicaraguan paradox, they will pose a bigger threat to the democratic system that puts them in power.

One of the candidates is a former dictator. Daniel Ortega, the Sandinista Party leader, fought his way into power in 1979, ruled with totalitarian inefficiency in the 1980s, and has no record of commitment to a political dispensation that he spent most of his adult life denigrating as "bourgeois democracy." The other candidate, now narrowly favored in the polls, is Arnoldo Alemán, the former mayor of Managua. The kind of threat that he could pose to Nicaragua's democracy is more complicated. Best known for building fountains and a romantic lakeside park in the downtown of a city that never recovered from a devastating earthquake in 1972, Alemán is a pothole-filling populist, a man with a reputation, uncommon among Nicaragua's political class, for getting things done. He is also, like a majority of his countrymen, a virulent

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anti-Sandinista. Alemán may be to Nicaragua what Boris Yeltsin is to Russia. Like Yeltsin, Alemán has succeeded politically by appealing to the people, not by suppressing them. Like Yeltsin, therefore, he is more likely to respect the system in which he has thrived. But he lives, like Yeltsin, in a political culture where powerful men have never surrendered their power easily. And the more skillful and popular the politician, the more capable he will be of twisting the system around his finger.

Then there is the problem of the army, always the greatest danger to democracy in Nicaragua. In 1979, the Sandinista guerrillas declared themselves the national army of Nicaragua, and for the next decade they were the foundation on which Sandinista power rested. When Chamorro defeated the Sandinistas in 1990, one might have expected her to dissolve this instrument of her own and her country's oppression. Despite her initial promise to remove the top Sandinista leaders from command, however, Chamorro quickly acquiesced to a combination of threats and blandishments and left the Sandinista army and its generals intact. It was as if, after the Civil War, Lincoln had made the Confederate troops into the army of the United States and sent the Union troops back to their farms. (In fairness to Chamorro, the mighty superpower to the north, which alone had the power to prevent this bizarre outcome in Nicaragua, had under George Bush no stomach for such vigorous involvement after the elections.) If Ortega wins, how long before the new and erstwhile ruler and his old and erstwhile army become one again? And, if Alemán wins, how long before the ruler and the army are at each other's throats?

In her autobiography, Chamorro writes of her dream "to lift us, the heirs of an imperfect legacy, above the mistakes of our political heritage, and to create a democracy." She would like to "domesticate our society of warriors" and turn them into "judicious men of letters." As the title of her memoirs suggests, however, this dream may be more of the heart than of the head. The six-year reign of Violeta Chamorro could prove to have been an aberration in Nicaraguan history rather than a harbinger of things to come.

One reason for such pessimism is that, in the context of Nicaragua's political culture, there was something profoundly unnatural about Chamorro's coming to power. She did not attain the presidency by dint of her own skills as a politician, a statesman or a warrior. On the contrary, she rode into power on the back of forces (and after the exhaustion of forces) well beyond her control. Indeed, her failings as a leader were probably the key to her success. The story of Violeta Chamorro's unquestionable accomplishments on behalf of her country actually inverts the "great man" theory of history: she succeeded where others failed in part because she was not a man and in part because she was not great. Nicaraguans may have been blessed during these critical years in their history with a leader too incompetent to undermine their latest attempt at democratic government.

From time immemorial, Nicaraguan political culture has revolved around the unmistakably male figure of the *caudillo*, sometimes as an object of fear, sometimes of admiration, usually of both. In the dark days of his country's recent civil war, Arturo Cruz Jr., Nicaragua's most penetrating historian, once lamented that it seemed to be "a hidden desire in some and an open desire in others, but in the final analysis it is the desire of all of us to be the next Somoza." The spell which this common aspiration cast on Nicaraguan politics was doubly malign. It encouraged those in power to look always for ways to keep it; and it made that task easier by debilitating their opponents, who invariably spent more time and energy quarreling among themselves over the right to succession than fighting the *caudillo*.

Those who chose Chamorro to run against the Sandinistas in the 1990 elections were consciously abrogating this traditional pattern. These were "not normal elections," one Chamorro supporter explained, and so the normally destructive process of choosing an opposition leader had to be suspended. Chamorro's candidacy was meant to lessen fears among voters that ousting the Sandinista *caudillismo* would lead only to the installation of a different brand of *caudillismo* in its place. And it was clear that only this celebrated widow of the martyred Pedro Joaquín Chamorro, mother to both Sandinistas and anti-Sandinistas, could unite an opposition filled with squabbling, jealous men, most of whom, if the unpleasant truth be told, would have rather seen the Sandinistas win than let one of their colleagues take pride of place. And left to its own devices, the Nicaraguan political class would never have overcome this problem. Only enormous outside pressures, from the Bush administration, from Venezuelan President Carlos Andrés Pérez and Costa Rican President Oscar Arias, forced the male candidates to end their fratricidal competition and to choose this woman

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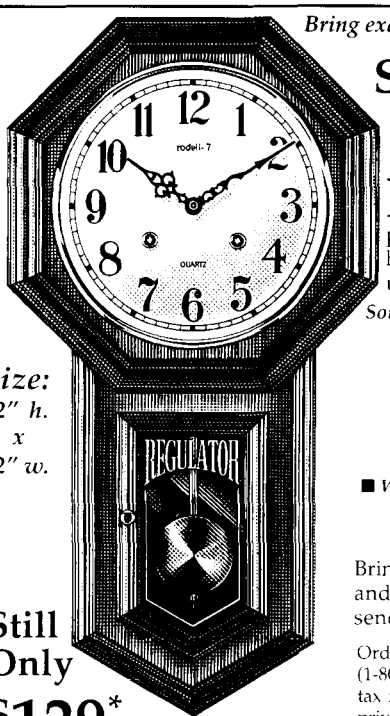

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to serve at the head of the ticket.

All the ambitious and experienced politicians had contempt for her. They doubted that Chamorro, with her reputation for physical and emotional frailty, could possibly "withstand the pounding of the rain." Even one of her top supporters at the time publicly acknowledged that "the man or woman chosen to govern the country will not necessarily be the best one." During the campaign, Virgilio Godoy, Chamorro's own running-mate and a typically ineffective Nicaraguan pol, derided her speeches as "not very sophisticated." When asked about Chamorro's weakness as a candidate, Godoy suggested dismissively that she would be good at drawing the women's vote.

But the powerful foreign interests in Washington, San José and Caracas knew that in Chamorro they had chosen the perfect soft-edged figurehead for the anti-Sandinista vessel. Chamorro's appeal as a candidate lay precisely in what she was not: a man, a boastful Nicaraguan politician, a Sandinista in military uniform. She knew that political abilities and smooth talking were not the key to victory. Quite the contrary. After years of being addressed by Sandinista leaders in Castro-length diatribes, after a decade of being taught to shout in unison "National Directorate, give us our orders!", the Nicaraguan people, Chamorro understood, "did not want to be preached to, nor did they wish to be chastised. They were tired of the vacuous and vain Sandinista dogma that had been forced down their throats for so long." Instead of political slogans, Chamorro offered them emotions: "I tried to open myself to them, revealing many of my feelings and idiosyncrasies in the process. I made myself vulnerable." In Nicaragua's political culture, where, as Arturo Cruz Jr. has observed, to describe someone as "conciliatory" is another way of saying he is "without character and easy to manipulate," this gentle, vulnerable approach could probably work only for a woman.

The Chamorro campaign was almost entirely symbolism. Confined to a wheelchair by a broken knee, Doña Violeta floated smiling but silent through admiring crowds, a Madonna-like figure dressed all in white. Compared to the newly dynamic Daniel Ortega, stumping like a slick American pol in the most modern campaign in Central American history, Chamorro sometimes felt herself a "peripheral figure," a mere "señora dressed in white." "In the macho culture of my country," she recalls, "few people believed that I, a woman and an invalid, would have the strength, energy, and will to last through a punishing campaign." And indeed, she barely did. Between trips abroad, many for treatment of her ailments, and then recovery in seclusion at home, Chamorro spent more time off the stump than on during the most crucial phase of the campaign. But it didn't matter. As she must have known, her personal weaknesses were her political strengths.

VIOLETA BARRIOS DE CHAMORRO BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Still, it would be a mistake to lay too much emphasis for Chamorro's historic accomplishments on her gender. After all, women can be *caudillos*, too. This was demonstrated by Eva Perón (who, in a few months, will be brought back from the dead, and be made chic, by Madonna), and Imelda Marcos might also have demonstrated it had she been given the chance. Nor did Violeta Chamorro lack many of the qualities usually associated with the *machismo* of her male counterparts. She possessed, for instance, an uncommon arrogance.

Or, rather, she possessed an arrogance that was perfectly common in someone of her high aristocratic—and Spanish—lineage. "Pedro and I are the descendants of men who were in the top echelons of Nicaragua's social structure," she writes proudly. "Ours was a ruling class of European-blood criollos (children of Spaniards born in America) in which birth determined status." A Sacasa by birth and a Chamorro by marriage (the rough equivalent, in the United States, of being a descendant of Washington married to a descendant of Jefferson), she never doubted her family's vocation to rule nor the unfitness of others less blessed by high birth. Like the rest of her class, she could barely hide her contempt for the arriviste Somozas or, in a different way, for the far humbler Ortegas.

Social position meant almost everything to her. When she first allied herself with the Sandinistas in 1979, it was in part because the revolutionary leaders had cleverly attracted to their side a small but distinguished group of Nicaraguan elites, "men Pedro and I related to socially." As for "the people," Chamorro could sometimes express the frustration felt by the progressive aristocrat who wonders whether the attempts at liberalization are sufficiently appreciated by those on whose behalf such efforts are allegedly intended. As her son once complained to her crusading husband, "Papa, you have given too much of yourself to this struggle [against Somoza]. The people of Nicaragua do not deserve the sacrifices you make."

Doña Violeta also had little regard for or interest in the great mass of "*Indios*"—as the whiter-skinned Nicaraguans often refer to the darker-skinned *mestizos*. This was especially egregious, since she owed them quite a bit. Those "*Indios*," after all,

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made up the bulk of the contra army which forced the Sandinistas to hold the kind of elections which, she sometimes acknowledges, they would never have held otherwise. Those same "*Indios*" then voted for her and against the Sandinistas in overwhelming numbers in 1990. Having gotten their vote, however, she made little effort to keep it. This fall, as a consequence, they will vote in droves for Alemán, in frustration with what most *campesinos* in Nicaragua's mountainous hinterlands regard as the Chamorro government's neglect and indifference. (Whether Alemán will deliver more, if he wins, remains to be seen.)

Chamorro's tendency to denigrate those who helped her to succeed is evidence of another quality that she shares with some of her Nicaraguan political colleagues—an almost self-destructive vanity. It is an odd but consistent pattern in Nicaragua's political history. Those who put their patron in power are often the first to be discarded once victory is achieved. The Ortegas turned on their "bourgeois" allies, like Chamorro, and even on guerrilla heroes like the dashing Edén Pastora, immediately after the revolution triumphed in 1979. After her own victory in 1990, Violeta Chamorro turned on her colleagues in the opposition political alliance, and on her military allies, the contras, in exactly the same manner. Such timely betrayals can make tactical sense; those who help you reach the top can quickly become the biggest threat to your staying there. But in Chamorro's case, the decision to jettison all allies outside her immediate family stemmed from a desire to sweep away evidence that her victory resulted from anything other than her own humble powers of persuasion, her "dreams of the heart" and, of course, divine will.

One of the most important supporters whom Chamorro tossed off in this way was the United States. In her memoirs, she declares herself "ashamed" of American involvement in her country and proclaims her devotion to the principle of non-intervention by the northern superpower. She freely denounces her current political rivals, who, in trying to recover property stolen from them by the Sandinistas *after* her election, "scurry to hide under the skirts of the U.S. Congress or the White House." Like many a Latin leader past and present, Chamorro has generally opposed American intervention except on those many occasions when she eagerly tried to enlist it on her own behalf. In fact, there is probably no one in the Western hemisphere who has more often benefited from the support of the United States or more frequently sought it, first against Somoza and then against the Sandinistas.

In the struggle against Somoza, she records in her memoirs, Chamorro's husband had looked to Jimmy Carter as "the missionary president" who would rid Nicaraguans of the oppressive dynasty. The Sandinistas' guns alone could never force the dictator from power. Only pressure from the United States could convince Somoza he was finished. Still, since she was the beneficiary of American diplomacy, Chamorro refuses to acknowledge that Carter's bungled attempt to ease Somoza out of power and a non-communist government into power was a form of intervention no less significant in its effects than William Howard Taft's effort to end Zelaya's sixteen-year dictatorship in 1909. Chamorro ritualistically condemns Taft, but she honors Carter as a Nicaraguan national hero.

Chamorro also fails to mention that, during the Sandinista era, *La Prensa*, her family newspaper, survived not on the strength of the "truth" and her own indomitable will, but on American dollars, passed both overtly and covertly from American government coffers to her own. In addition, *La Prensa*'s existence depended constantly on American diplomatic and economic pressure, combined with the military pressure of the contras, which deterred the Sandinistas from closing the paper down altogether. Other opposition organs not so favored by American and Western interests, such as *El Pueblo*, the newspaper allied with the "ultra left" Worker's Front, were summarily shut down by the Sandinistas in the earliest stages of the revolution.

Then there is the matter of Chamorro's presidential campaign. Critics of the Nicaraguan elections in 1990 were wrong to claim that the United States "bought" Chamorro's victory. The fact is that the Sandinistas outspent Chamorro by more than two-to-one, if one counts the government resources at their disposal; and journalists on the scene reported that, while the Sandinista campaign machine was a marvel of modern technical wizardry, the Chamorro campaign was almost invisible. But it is also a fact that the Chamorro campaign was financed almost entirely by the government of the United States, and the Sandinistas and their defenders in the U.S. Congress rightly charged that this was a form of American intervention. The Sandinistas put up with the blatant intrusion into their sovereignty only because they were so desperately eager

LEON WIESELTIER

against identity

Leon Wieseltier's new book grew out of an outspoken and widely discussed essay that originally appeared in the pages of *The New Republic*. *Against Identity* is a series of philosophical aphorisms—meditations, really—on the politics and culture of identity in America. It is a collection of questions, objections, and reflections on identity; grave and witty quarrels with the greatest cliché of our day; a philosophical response to the obsession with identity that now characterizes American politics and culture; and an attempt to rehabilitate the idea of individualism against the cheap comforts of communitarianism.

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to end American support for the other, more dangerous form of intervention: the contras.

Chamorro's dismissal of the contras may be the most awful case of her ingratitude. In an early chapter of her memoirs, Chamorro writes of the lessons that she and her husband learned during three decades of fighting the Somoza dynasty. Chief among these was that "a civic movement lacking in military support cannot succeed." Applying such logic to the struggle against the Sandinistas should lead her to the obvious conclusion that, while the contras may not have been sufficient by themselves to bring down the Sandinistas and inaugurate free elections, neither could such extraordinary results have been achieved without them. But Chamorro, who was in the privileged position of being the biggest beneficiary of a war that she did not herself have to fight or even to support, does her best to avoid this logic.

There are places in her memoirs where Chamorro acknowledges that "a selective use of military force did play a role in the ultimate achievement of peace," that the Sandinistas only began to talk about holding elections when they "saw their survival threatened" by the military gains of the contras. Most of the time, though, she burnishes her credentials as a lover of peace at the contras' expense. Thus she contradicts herself, declaring that to this day "I have never believed the solution was to go to war," and arguing that the contras' struggle, far from "furthering the democratic cause," may "even have hindered democracy." To the contras she offered demobilization and then an indifference bordering on contempt. (Her top advisers referred to the *campesino* army as "a bunch of Indians.") To the Sandinista army, on the other hand, who might be considered by some to have been an even bigger hindrance to democracy, Chamorro offered guardianship of the nation's future, for the second time in a decade.

It is an irony typical of Nicaragua's unpredictable political culture that the same woman who helped defeat the Sandinistas electorally in 1990 also played a significant part in their revolutionary triumph eleven years earlier. Chamorro surprisingly devotes quite a bit of space in her memoirs to chronicling her role as a witting accomplice to one of the great charades of the late cold war. The story bears brief retelling here, for it reveals a guilelessness and an incapacity to act that helped to push her country toward disaster. Under different circumstances later on, the same guilelessness and incompetence may have been just what her nation needed.

In the last weeks before the fall of the Somoza dynasty in the summer of 1979, the Sandinistas feared that their impending victory might yet be snatched away at the last minute by a panicky American government just then awakening to the reality that a Marxist-Leninist revolution was about to triumph in Nicaragua. To forestall an American intervention (which, incidentally, the Carter administration had no intention of launching), the Sandinistas took steps to hide their true revolutionary aspirations by forming "tactical" alliances with key members of the moderate, noncommunist, bourgeois opposition. Just as Odysseus and his men escaped from the Cyclops's cave by clinging to the undersides of sheep as the blinded giant let his flock out to pasture, so the Sandinistas hoped the imperial giant of the north would be fooled by the comforting presence of prominent businessmen and aristocrats long enough to let the revolution pass through and out of harm's way.

As part of their clever design, the Sandinistas invited Violeta Chamorro and another prominent moderate, Alfonso Robelo, to join their provisional government junta just a few weeks before Somoza fled the country. As in 1990, Chamorro was to play the part of a symbol: the leading lady of the aristocracy and the haute bourgeoisie. And she wanted to play it alone. When the Americans, in a futile last-ditch effort to contain the revolution, pressed the Sandinistas to expand their junta to add more moderates, the Sandinistas were eager to comply. (They knew the junta would be irrelevant after the revolution succeeded.) But Doña Violeta refused, undoubtedly because she enjoyed her new celebrity and apparent power and did not want them diluted.

From the first, however, Chamorro suspected that she was being manipulated by men whom she did not trust. She recorded in her diary that "I have undertaken an enormous responsibility with a group of people I don't really know.... The more I see of our colleagues, the more I wonder who they are." The Sandinista leaders Humberto Ortega and Tomás Borge, she wrote, "gave me the chills." She knew that Daniel Ortega and Moisés Hassan, her fellow members of the junta, were "communists"—a remarkable word for her to use, given the fact that neither American journalists on the scene nor Carter administration officials in Washington ever used it publicly. Chamorro confessed, at least to her diary, that the "possibility that they are using me to legit-

Mr. Moto's Confession

The famous Tokyo detective looked as if he'd taken a shower
in his linen suit and then slept in it.
He mopped his shiny forehead with a handkerchief.
"Pascal was right," he said, his tenor slightly nasal.
"Men are so necessarily mad, that not to be mad would amount to
another form of madness. What's more," he added, the cat
eying the canary, "contradiction is not a sign of falsity,
nor is the want of contradiction a sign of truth—Pascal again."
He took out his fountain pen. I saw my chance.
Mr. Moto, I asked, should I believe all those stories
I've heard about you? "Please do not," he murmured. "I do not."
He was writing something on a cocktail napkin.
"In fact," he said, his pen continuing to move, "my real name is
Laszlo Löwenstein. I was born in Hungary, I drove myself crazy
as an actor in Zürich and Berlin, and now that I live in Hollywood
I have bad dreams. Last night one of them told me
I'll end up buried alive in a tale by Edgar Allan Poe."
He coughed politely, capped his pen, and getting to his feet
handed me the little piece of paper. "An ancient Japanese
poetic form," he said. Even as I stared at it
the little cairn of characters, each a tiny, exotic bird cage
with its doors open, blurred, melted, and reformed as if rising
to the surface of a well, where these words trembled
but stayed clear enough to read: *As evening nears, how clearly*
a dog's bark carries over the water.

Jonathan Aaron

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imize their actions and not to realize Pedro's dream (democracy) gives me great unease." As the days passed and the fall of Somoza drew nearer, Chamorro saw more and more clearly the fraud in which she was taking a leading part. The "junta had been designed to appear broad-based," she noted in her diary, but the "moderate elements like myself and Alfonso are irrelevant. Daniel, Humberto and Tomás, whom I mistrust as radicals, are the ones in control."

Despite her fears, though, she took no action, either before or after the triumph of the revolution. Chamorro could have publicly blown the whistle on the Sandinista fraud. She could have fought the Sandinistas internally, using her power as a symbol to stop or at least to slow down their systematic obliteration of political and economic freedoms in Nicaragua. She could have resigned, denounced them and helped to lead a political opposition, as Alfonso Robelo did many months later. Such steps, taken in a timely manner, might have made a difference. In Washington, officials in the Carter administration were desperately trying to put off the day when the real course of the Sandinista revolution became unmistakably clear. As Robert Pastor, Carter's top adviser on Latin America, later put it, the administration was trying hard not to lift the "mask of democracy from the faces of the Sandinistas to show they were really Communists." Chamorro's continued presence in the junta allowed the then-Deputy Secretary of State Warren Christopher to testify before Congress that the Nicaraguan government's "orientation" was "generally moderate and pluralistic."

By exposing this nonsense, Chamorro might have forced the Carter administration to take more decisive steps, if only to protect the president's vulnerable right flank in Congress. Instead, Chamorro fell into a passive stupor after the Sandinista victory. She mechanically signed decrees expropriating banks and businesses and abolishing the courts, the constitution and the Congress: "I was told after the fact by a kid from Tomás Borge's office to sign the paper." She sat silent in meetings where the Sandinistas discussed plans to eliminate all private property: "to my surprise no one objected." She watched as Cuban security and military officials took commanding positions throughout the new government bureaucracy. When her friends upbraided her for signing the decree that made the Sandinista army the national army of Nicaragua, she was annoyed at their blindness. "The Nicaraguan bourgeoisie had not yet awakened to the fact that the Sandinistas ... had no plans to cede control." Chamorro was, of course, "painfully aware" of these facts but chose "not to decry any of these maneuvers." On the contrary, she assured her frightened compatriots that "*los muchachos* [the Sandinistas] are not bad ... give them a chance." At the final, decisive betrayal of "Pedro's dream," Doña Violeta was mute.

She was also, amid the tiger sharks of Nicaraguan power politics, very much out of her depth. Her son Carlos Fernando Chamorro, though a Sandinista, took pity on her and urged her to resign. "This is much too complicated for you," he told her. But the Sandinista leadership needed her around for a while, to stave off pressures from the north. Chamorro recalls tendering her resignation as many as six times, but "my resignation was not accepted.... [I]t took nine months for them to finally let me go." When she did finally resign, she cited poor health as the reason, not political disagreements. A suspicious interviewer observed days later that she did not look "like a sick person." To which Chamorro replied, "God has given me the gift of being unusually strong."

Chamorro was by no means alone in keeping the "mask of democracy" firmly fixed to the face of the Sandinista revolution. When she resigned from the junta in 1980, another prominent member of the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie readily took her place and then spent the next year signing expropriation decrees and advising his friends not to worry about *los muchachos*. This blend of guilelessness, vanity and ambition was surprisingly common among members of Nicaragua's elite class. Even those with a notable devotion to democracy and justice allowed themselves to be manipulated and then quietly discarded by men who lacked their scruples. Indeed, it has been the tragedy of Nicaragua that those who most genuinely believe in democratic values—like, perhaps, Violeta Chamorro—have invariably been incompetent at using power to achieve their dreams. And this raises a disturbing question. If these would-be democrats did possess the skills and the determination of more ruthless men like Humberto Ortega or Anastasio Somoza García, how long would they remain democrats?

For Violeta Chamorro in the 1990s, these problems proved to be of no relevance. She rose to power on the labors of others, and that is how she stayed there. Although she was too weak to keep military power out of the hands of the Sandinista army, the steady pressure of the United States and other Western powers kept that disastrous mistake from destroying her or the democratic process. To survive in a hostile, post-cold war world, the Sandinista army decided it had to "professionalize" and to "modernize;" its leaders were not about to challenge the victorious West by carrying out a coup. With that danger averted, Chamorro's guilelessness and incompetence may have proved a blessing for all Nicaraguans. She made only a feeble attempt at *continuismo*, not for herself but for her son-in-law Antonio Lacayo, and the attempt was, fortunately, a laughable failure. In truth, her heart was never really in it. And now the Nicaraguan people can vote for a new president and bid farewell to the woman whom they can fondly remember as the unlikely savior of their democracy.

ROBERT KAGAN is the author of *A Twilight Struggle: American Power and Nicaragua, 1977-1990* (Free Press).

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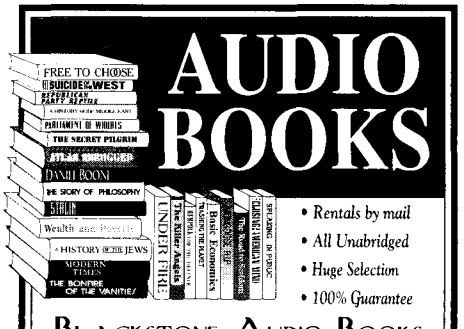

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LONDON DIARIST

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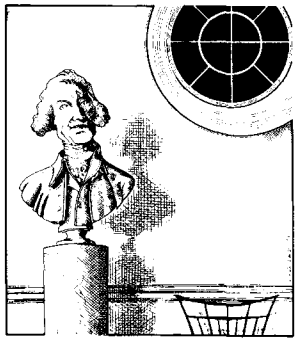
BACK IN ENGLAND FOR A FEW DAYS, it was a pleasure to see European newsstands, the kind that are layered with newspapers like artichokes. In England, newspapers are often hung hierarchically, with the better broadsheets at the top, the pretentious tabloids in the middle and the ambitiously vulgar rags at the bottom. The eye can move down the body politic, in a slide of increasing dishevelment—here is the jacket and tie, and here, lower down, are the ripped jeans, the shoeless feet. Last week provided optimal conditions because all the papers had the same story about a Roman Catholic bishop, Roderick Wright, who had suddenly abandoned his diocese and eloped with his mistress. By the time I arrived in London, a second mistress, Joanna Whibley, had announced that years ago she had had an affair with the bishop and that he had fathered her son, now 15.

SO FAR, THIS KIND OF PRIESTLY hypocrisy seemed unremarkable—nothing that one could not find in Stendhal's fictional Jesuits. The distinctive modern coda came a day after the second mistress's revelations, when the Bishop, still in hiding, sold his story to a tabloid. Photographed "relaxing" in a white t-shirt, Bishop Wright, now insouciant, announced that "there are no more mistresses.... Just these two." There is no being more self-righteous than a British journalist who sees reflected in someone else's lapse his own habitual hypocrisy. To judge from the journalistic punishment meted out to the bishop, one would think that fornication and adultery had been invented by the Catholic Church. From the top of the newsstands, there was the smothered prurience of *The Times* and *The Guardian*: "CATHOLIC CHURCH ROCKED BY NEW REVELATIONS." In the middle, at the country's smug waistband, was the petit-bourgeois self-congratulation of *The Daily Mail* and *The Daily Express*: "BISHOP SAYS: 'NO MORE MISTRESSES.' " And, down at toe-level, an honest vigor: *The Sun* and *The Daily Star*: "BONKING BISHOP SCORES TWICE."

WHAT I COULD NOT HELP NOTICing on this trip, along with the bishop's story, was the immense growth of corporate sponsorship in Britain. If you phone the speaking clock for the time, a rich, buttery actor's voice declaims: "The time, sponsored by Accurist, is...." The London newspaper *The Evening Standard* plans to sponsor an underground train and lather it in advertising. At a concert by the London Symphony Orchestra, I noticed not only the concert's elephantine list of business and private sponsors, but that many of the leading players are individually sponsored. They have endowed chairs, like professors, and are listed as if they were the creations of their sponsors. Sponsorship induces vertigo because it encourages thoughts of infinite regress. If nothing is too small for sponsorship then—nothing is too small for sponsorship. Why shouldn't the musical instruments be sponsored? Or the instrument cases?



THIS BRITISH VIRUS was not caught in America, though America is its unrivaled home. It was inhaled from the capitalist air. Even old-fashioned British left-wingers have stopped blaming such things on America, and rightly so. But America still offers the most wondrous examples. I am somewhat hysterically suspicious of corporate sponsorship and like to collect local degradations. On a Connecticut flier advertising missing children ("Mailbox Values® asks.... Have you seen us?") appeared a photo of a girl who has been missing since the age of 4. A computer approximation of the girl as she may now look at age 19 was provided. Underneath ran the sublime sentence: "Age-progression sponsored by Stanley Steamer Carpet Cleaner."

THE MARXIST ANALYSIS OF HOW ideology works has not been discredited; it is proved every day by advertising. We seem to have forgotten that advertising has a corrupt relation to the truth. Advertisers and sponsors want to sell us something. It is not that the London Symphony Orchestra has merely cut a clear-eyed deal, or made a compromise, with its sponsors. It is in bondage to them.

THE CHARGE IS NOT THAT COMPAnies influence what they sponsor, though this may happen. It is that a less palpable disfigurement, an inner spoliation, occurs. It is registered, as so often, at the level of language. When I hear that "this segment of ABC News is brought to you by ..." I do not think that ABC's objectivity has been breached. But language has been breached. What does it mean to say that our news is "brought to us" by a corporate sponsor? How could such a thing be possible? There is no sense in which that company has actually bought the news and is now selling it to us. But that is what the language is telling us. Similarly, Lindt Chocolate has trademarked the word "Swiss" whenever it appears next to Lindt: "Lindt Swiss® Milk Chocolate." We have hardly lost the word "Swiss" to Lindt. Nevertheless, Lindt, through corporate *force majeure* has bought this particular usage of the word. This usage does not belong to us.

COMPANIES WANT TO insert their names into quotidian life so that a brand name becomes a noun or a verb—as Coca-Cola is Coke or, as in Britain, Hoover is a verb meaning to vacuum. The best way to do this is to advertise through sponsorship and to attach the brand name to ordinary life. Mobil Oil does this every so often on the oped pages of *The New York Times*. The company runs a couple of hundred words on something other than gasoline and then autographs it with a large Mobil logo. On last year's Thanksgiving Day, Mobil ran a treacly prose poem called "A Time to say thank-you": "Thanks ... for baseball and the virtues of dedication and loyalty ... for the Special Olympics, which never fail to inspire us ... for November when the air is crisp.... Happy Thanksgiving to everybody." The reader starts: Mobil wants to sponsor Thanksgiving!

THE SPIRIT RISES UP AGAINST THE picture of a company telling us what to be grateful for. Yet this goes on, in large and small ways, every day, and most of us do not recognize our own spiritual oppression because it is so widespread and because its marks are epistemological rather than rudely political. We can't be bothered to resist the mental adventurism of huge companies, and so we are silent. Yet a language of resistance is open to us: the nineteenth-century anticapitalist tradition that saw men trapped in "the cash-nexus." In its political form, it is a British and German tradition. But a milder American version exists, a suspicion of induced conformity. Emerson warned us that "society everywhere is in conspiracy against the manhood of every one of its members." A visit to over-sponsored Britain makes one a little Emerson, reminds one to be in a state of spiritual paranoia.

JAMES WOOD

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Where We Stand

By Albert Shanker, President
American Federation of Teachers

The Real Solution

Anyone who tuned in to the Republican convention heard Bob Dole (and others) say that teacher unions are the big obstacle to improving the public schools. No one talked about the need for higher academic standards, a stronger curriculum, better textbooks—or about getting students to work harder. Just get rid of the unions and the education problem will be solved.

A few days before Bob Dole's acceptance speech, the American Federation of Teachers released a report that gives a much more useful picture of what's wrong with the schools and what can be done to improve them. *Making Standards Matter 1996* is the second annual AFT review of academic standards in the 50 states. What did we find? The overwhelming majority of states believe that school reform must begin with higher academic standards. However, many of the standards that states have proposed are not clear and specific enough; and, for the most part, there are no consequences for failing to meet the standards.

Most states believe that school reform must begin with higher academic standards.

First, the good news. Forty-eight states and the District of Columbia are committed to setting statewide academic standards (only Iowa and Wyoming do not plan to do so). This is encouraging, especially given congressional opposition to the Clinton administration's standards program, Goals 2000. Congress may not be committed to raising academic standards, but the rest of the country is.

Yet while most states are working to develop higher academic standards, only 15 have standards in the core subjects—English, math, history, and science—that could form the basis for a rigorous curriculum. The reason is that many of the standards are vague and general and lacking in content. Take this middle-school math standard from Nebraska: "Students should be able to discover and develop formulas." Which formulas? The standard does not say. A social studies standard from Massachusetts suffers from a similar fuzziness: "Students will explain how a variety of factors can lead to the outcome of an event."

Unless they make clear *which* mathematical formulas students should master and *which* events in history students should learn about, standards will be useless. They won't offer teachers guidance about the material they need to cover or tell parents what they should expect their children to learn. Indeed, standards like these will offer little improvement over the system we now have. This will be a tragedy for all our students but particularly for those in inner-city schools because they are the ones who stand to benefit most from a challenging curriculum.

In his new book, *The Schools We Need* (Doubleday, 1996), E.D. Hirsch, Jr., says that giving all children a chance to study the same high-quality curriculum is a "civil rights" issue, and I think he is absolutely correct. It's not enough to make sure that youngsters have a seat in a public school; they should be guaranteed access to a curriculum that is rich in substance and gives them the knowledge they will need to participate and prosper in American society. Most students today, particularly those in poor neighborhoods, don't study such a curriculum. Strong, content-based standards are their best hope.

There's another reason state standards need to be clearer and more content-specific. Americans are the most mobile people on earth. This means, according to one study, that one out of every five students switches schools each year; and the rates are much higher in the inner-city. When youngsters change schools, they also change curriculums. Teachers try hard to bring new students up to speed, but this takes time away from the other students, and some youngsters never catch up. Teachers ought to know, at the beginning of each year, that wherever their students have come from, they have studied the same material. Vague standards will not provide that consistency.

Developing standards that are clear, specific and sufficiently grounded in academic content is hard work. It means making tough decisions about what is essential—and what has to be left out. It is far easier, in the name of teacher flexibility or local control, to duck these decisions. But taking the path of least resistance is not doing children or teachers any favors.

The states are off to a promising start. The majority have developed good standards in at least one subject, and some have exemplary standards that others can look to as models. But states need to do more than raise standards; they must also be encouraged to attach stakes to these standards. Students need to know that the hard work they put in will count—both in school, for promotion and graduation, and when they look for a job or apply for entrance to a college. Otherwise, the highest standards and the richest curriculum are unlikely to solve our problems. So far, fewer than half of the states have plans to make students accountable for meeting standards.

The standards movement is making progress, but there is still much work to do. If Bob Dole were smart, he would stop blaming teachers for the problems in the schools, and join us in the fight to raise standards.

To order *Making Standards Matter 1996*, send $10 to AFT Order Dept., 555 New Jersey Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20001, and ask for item 265.

Mr. Shanker's comments appear in this ad under the auspices of the American Federation of Teachers. Reader correspondence is invited. Address your letters to Mr. Shanker at the AFT, 555 New Jersey Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001. © 1996 by Albert Shanker.

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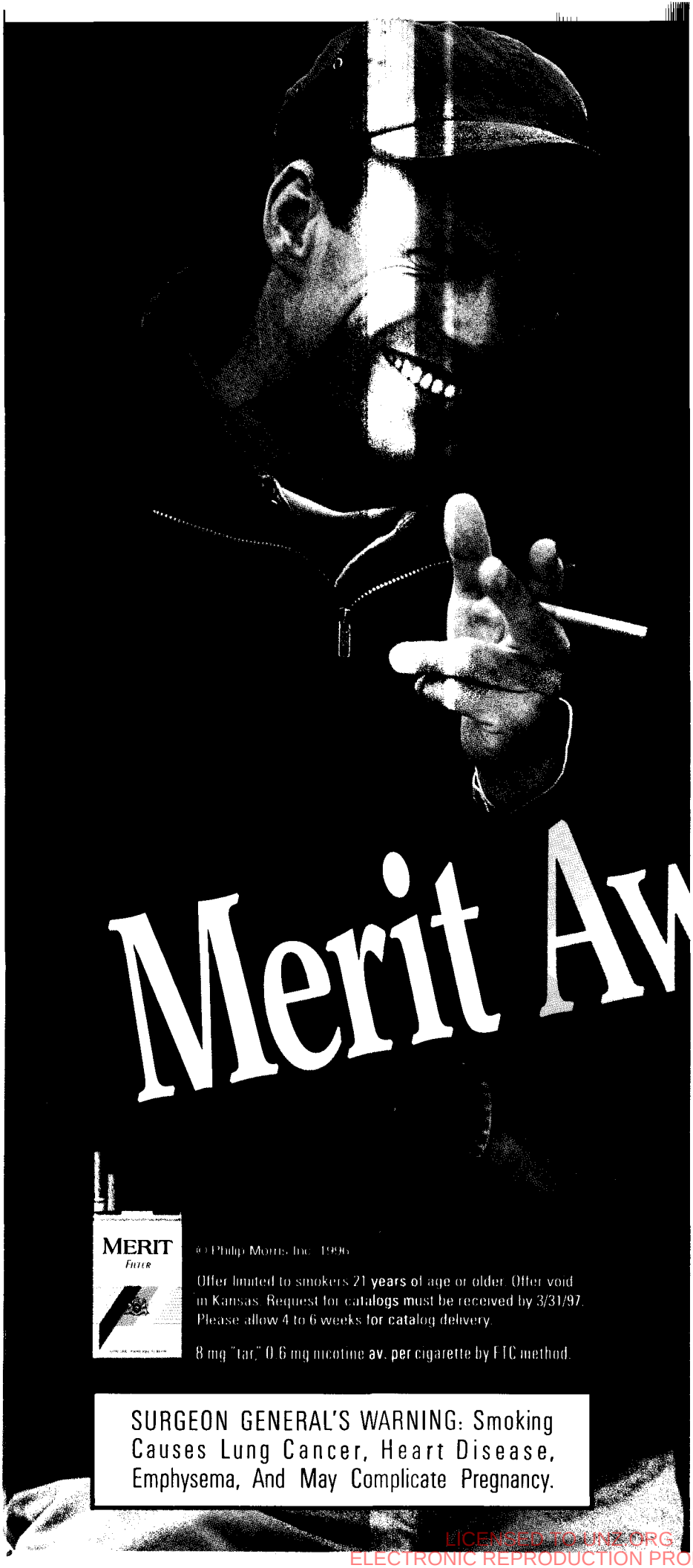

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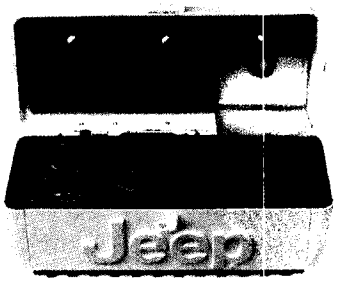

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